THE PRIEST IN HISTORY: A STUDY IN DIVIDED LOYALTIES IN THE FRENCH LOWER CLERGY FROM 1776 TO 1789

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of History in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences of Duke University

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ABSTRACT

(History)

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This essay plumbs the question of loyalty amongst the Catholic lower clergy in France during the decade prior to the Revolution of 1789 and traces the development of what is termed a schizophrenic condition of allegiance to Church and State in the period. The materials upon which the study is based comprise the entire relevant pamphlet collections of the Bibliothèque Nationale, the Bibliothèque de la Société du Port-Royal, the Bibliothèque Historique de la Ville de Paris, the British Museum (Croker Collection), and Duke University in addition to a limited number of related manuscripts in the Archives Nationales, the Bibliothèque Nationale, and the Bibliothèque Sainte-Genvière in Paris. Other sources include the divers Mémoires of the period, contemporary newspapers, the Archives Parlementaires and published collections of documents.

The study is placed within the context of the evolving civil rôle of the French parish priest in the eighteenth century. As an administrative officer of the civil State, he kept birth records, prepared marriage certificates, distributed charity, and supervised education. The intendancy of the philosophe Turgot at Limoges and his later term as Minister of Finances under Louis XVI illustrate an extended use of curés as agents of royal administration. Coextensively, the essay examines the sympathy displayed toward the curés by Voltaire and Rousseau (Profession de foi d'un vicaire savoyard) concerning the rôle the priests should play in society, as moral preceptors to the people. Sensitive to the long criticisms throughout the eighteenth century of those who attacked them and their adopted order, some curés in the fifteen years prior to the Revolution formulated a concept of their rôle in society resembling that formed by Voltaire and Rousseau. Popular already by virtue of their reputation for honesty and hard work, the curés in their writings sought to re-inforce their image as industrious public persons.

Yet the curés were pulled between loyalty to Church and to State. This polarity is traced from the publication in 1776 of Abbé Henri Reymond's Droits des curés et des paroisses, considerés sous leur double rapport, spirituel et temporel to the meeting of the States-General in May 1789. Evolving with condi-

tions, the policy of reform-minded curés was to win acceptance of their utility in society, to establish the primacy of their rôle as citizens, and to seek alliance with reformers of the third estate. The curé reform movement developed against a long opposition of higher and intermediate clergy to the expressed aims of curés to recover lost prestige and influence. Discouraged by the unresponsiveness of the General Assemblies of the Clergy and by their inability to gain representatives in Church meetings, the curés took heart late in 1788 and early in 1789 from the triumphs of their colleagues in Dauphiné and organized themselves in Lorraine, Orléans, Brittany, and Berry. They were engaged in a day-to-day struggle to win acceptance of the principle of equal representation in the electoral assemblies and, when this goal was achieved through the royal electoral decree of 24 January 1789, they endeavored to elect curé delegates to the States-General. Absorbed in the work of organization and agitation and in maneuvers to win the support of the third estate by renunciation of clerical tax privileges, the patriot curés appear not to have realized that the cardinal question for all clergy was the disposition of Church property.

PREFACE

The subject of this dissertation stemmed from a question asked of my by Professor Harold T. Parker in the course of the presentation of a paper about the French clergy during a seminar in my first year of graduate study. The question--which disturbed me at the time--was: Why were the curés disloyal to the Church? In my research for the M.A. thesis in the pamphlet collection at Duke University, I came upon a partial answer within a narrow framework. But not until I dipped into the vast holdings of the Bibliothèque Nationale, the Bibliothèque Historique de la Ville de Paris, and other European libraries did I discover evidence that shed light upon what we might call the dichotomy in the curés' thinking, the problem of a double allegiance to State and to Church that was posed for many articulate lower clergymen. In trying to trace this schizoid idea in the eighteenth century, I read the writings of the philosophes--especially Voltaire and Diderot--and came to believe that from them, or from the acrid criticisms of the clergy that their thoughts engendered, came in part the form of the problem that the curés faced. In this study, I have attempted to show the gradually

evolving response by curé writers to this problem and to place it within the context of changing conditions and the flow of events in France prior to the Revolution.

The pamphlets read in divers libraries in Europe comprise the hard core of evidence for this study. Those pamphlets relating to clerical affairs that I considered most significant are listed in the Bibliography. It will be noted that most of these works are unsigned and undated. With some assistance from predecessors in this field of anonymous literature (notably M. G. Garrett for the pamphlets alone, and Messrs. A.-A. Barbier and J.-M. Quérard for anonymous works in general), I have attempted to classify these works and to indicate the probable category of the author. Painful at first, the process of identification becomes easier over the years--although not always surer--as one acquires a sensitivity to the flow of opinions and an intimate acquaintance with the climate of ideas of the day. With no evidence of large-scale forgeries or of a publishing plot, one proceeds with tolerable certainty on the basis of a close scrutiny of internal evidence in the writings and of an acute analysis of the intentions of the authors in writing. Yet, of course, in the field of anonymous literature considerable care is always requisite.

A word of thanks should be extended here to the many archivists, librarians, and historians in Europe and the U. S.

who have aided me in my research. Not least amongst these is Monsieur A. Gazier, Curator of the Bibliothèque de la Société de Port-Royal in Paris, who keeps burning the torch of Pascal and who furnished invaluable aid in such enterprises as the identification of the handwriting of the Abbé Grégoire on the pamphlets in the collection there. Nor should the Société itself be overlooked in expressing gratitude for the provision of a stove during the cold days of January and February 1962 to heat the main Reading Room. To Professor Harold T. Parker I extend my appreciation for reading the manuscript and for judicious suggestions. Throughout the long years of this study, the spiritual and material support of my parents is gratefully acknowledged.

W. H. W.

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THE PRIEST IN HISTORY: A STUDY IN DIVIDED LOYALTIES IN THE FRENCH LOWER CLERGY FROM 1776 TO 1789

INTRODUCTION

Whether or not the French Catholic clergy on the eve of the Revolution constituted a veritable order in the State seems an academic point, although one much discussed at the time and one still debated by writers to-day. What is certain is that the clergy enjoyed a juridical status as an order, and it had special functions in French society that historically had given its members a certain status apart from the people and the nobility. Yet despite their common vocation, the French Catholic clergy in the eighteenth century did not form a united body. Indeed, that some members of the French clergy considered their ultimate allegiance to be to groups other than the ecclesiastical corps will be one of the central theses developed in this study.

In 1789, all Frenchmen were divided into three legal groupings, clergy, nobility, and third estate, according to their vocation or particular function in society. The origins of the groupings went back to the Middle Ages where a tripartite division of society comprised those who prayed (<u>oratores</u>), those who

defended the country (bellatores), and those who worked to provide for others (laboratores). This distinction of orders became a fundamental law in the kingdom, consecrated by time and tradition as a tenet of the unwritten French Constitution.

Having preceded the other two orders as a constituted body, the clergy formed the first of the orders, that is to say, the first estate of the French Nation with its particular position as the oldest order embodied in canon law. Although the preëminence of the Catholic clergy was more honorific than effective, nevertheless in the meetings of the Provincial States and in the States-General the ecclesiastics were allotted the first place. A more practical privilege enjoyed by the clergy in their everyday lives was the right to be tried only by diocesan or monastic authorities.

In addition, members of the clergy benefited from a special position in regard to taxation: the king did not levy taxes directly upon the first estate. An historic privilege of the clergy, this right had been from century to century ever more restricted and attacked by royal authority, not only in practice but in theory. For land, this exemption ceased in part to have effect on terre à bail or à ferme. For persons and furniture, Louis XIV and Louis XV had subjected the clergy to payment of the capitation and the vingtième; but the clergy had repurchased its contributive part of these taxes by means of a fixed sum

called the *don gratuit*, the amount of which was determined in accord with royal authority in the quinquennial assemblies of the Clergy. The Church of France in this way conserved the right to regulate herself the repartition and collection of the sum she contributed to the public treasury.

In the divers writings that appeared in the years prior to the Revolution the clergy was commonly described as the wealthiest of the orders. Estimates varied as to the actual extent of clerical landholdings, but in the main the figure was put at between 30 and 50 per cent of the total land in France. Modern scholarship tends greatly to minimize the extent of the clergy's possessions; the most modest estimates put the figure at between six and ten per cent of all French soil.[1] The tangled condition of clerical finances resulted in disagreement in 1789 as well as to-day over the amount of the Church's yearly income. A consensus of the best accounts, however, would fix the ecclesiastical income at between 150,000,000 and 180,000,000 *livres* annually. Of this amount roughly half came from property income

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1. These figures are based largely on studies made of the sale of the nationalized Church lands. The estimates vary according to the different regions of France, with the figures reaching 20 per cent for the north of France. See Georges Lefebvre, *La Révolution de 1789* (Paris, 1938), p. 84, in the series "Les cours de Sorbonne" (Centre de Documentation Universitaire, 5, Place de la Sorbonne, Paris Ve).

and half from the tithes.[1] In addition, members of the lower clergy received small amounts from the casuel, or surplice fees, which were charges levied by priests for administering the sacraments of baptism and matrimony and for officiating at the services of the dead. These fees were claimed and paid only with a certain repugnance, for it seemed to many that the tithes should spare the faithful from charges of this sort.[2]

The distribution of the Church's great yearly revenues from its tithes and properties was made in unequal fashion amongst

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1. It is disputed whether the biens or the tithes provided the greater amount of ecclesiastical revenue. Pierre de la Gorce in his Histoire religieuse de la Révolution Française (Paris, 1925), Vol. I, p. 12, has estimated the tithes at 80,000,000 livres and the biens at 85,000,000 livres. Talleyrand, who served as Agent General of the clergy's fiscal affairs, put the figures at 80,000,000 livres from the tithes and 90,000,000 from the biens-fonds. See the Motion de M. l'Evêque d'Autun sur les biens ecclésiastiques, du 10 octobre 1789 [Paris, chez Baudoin, Imprimeur de l'Assemblée Nationale, rue du Foin Saint-Jacques, no. 31. s.d. Pp. 24], p. 6. Necker, in his unreliable essay, De l'administration des finances de France (Paris, 1785), Vol. II, p. 308, gives the amount of tithes to be 130,000,000 livres. A modern scholar, Philippe Sagnac, estimates the amount of clerical income to be somewhat more than generally given by contemporaries of the time; he puts the figure at about 200,000,000 from biens-fonds. See La formation de la société française moderne, (Paris, 1945-46), Vol. II, p. 12. One of the most modern and most succinct summaries on this general topic is found in Arthur Paul Levack, "The Principal Immediate Non-Parliamentary Origins of the Civil Constitution of the Clergy." (Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Harvard University, 1941), pp. 22, 68, 69.

2. Marcel Marion, Dictionnaire des institutions de la France au XVIIème et XVIIIème siècles (Paris, 1923), p. 74.

the hierarchy. A Rohan, Archbishop of Strasbourg, might receive 800,000 livres a year[1] while the lowly country curé would have but 700 livres, and his assistant, the vicaire, but 350. It should be remembered, however, that before the Revolution the French bishops often inherited the titles of Duke or Count with their appointment to particular bishoprics; the Archbishop of Paris, for example, was concurrently Duke of Saint-Cloud and "pair et conseiller né du Parlement de Paris." The bishops thus represented a body within the State that ranked ahead of the simple nobility, and they required considerable wealth to maintain their status. Yet this fact did not silence an increasingly acrid criticism both from without and within the clergy of the extremes of fortune that existed in the hierarchy.

Not only was there a great disparity between the incomes of the clergy, but, in addition, there was an unequal distribution of the burden of taxes, or décimes, paid by members of the clergy within their own order to meet the costs of raising money for the don gratuit. The décimes were direct impositions upon all holders of benefices. By virtue of letters patent of 1616, the décimes were levied in each diocese by a Diocesan Bu reau comprising in general the bishop, or his vicar-general, and

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1. Abbé Augustin Sicard, L'ancien clergé de France: les évêques avant la Révolution (Paris, 1912), pp. 106, 108-109, 110 (Note #1), 120.

representatives of the various groups of benefices, viz. cathedral chapters, abbots and other regular clergy, and the curés. In practice, the influence of the bishops was often decisive,[1] and the struggle between the lower clergy and the regular clergy concerning the composition of these bureaux and the amount of the décimes provides a significant theme in local ecclesiastical history during the 1780's in France.[2] Appeals from the bureaux could be made to the chambres ecclésiastiques, the tribunals which, above the bureaux, judged matters relative to the décimes. These appeal courts were composed of the archbishops and their suffragan bishops from each of the seven areas in which the courts were located. The members of the clergy were taxed on a graduated scale, in theory according to the value of the benefice held. There were eight classes of benefices. The tax burden upon the lower clergy was heavy in proportion to their income; a curé with an income of 700 livres would often pay 50-60 livres or more.[3]

Originally the tithes in France had been the patrimony

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1. Marion, op. cit., pp. 62-63.

2. See, in particular, John McManners, French Ecclesiastical Society under the Ancien Régime: A Study of Angers in the Eighteenth Century (Manchester, 1960).

3. Marion, op. cit., p. 63.

of the parish priests. But through the vicissitudes of time the right of the bishops in the various dioceses to appoint curés with powers to collect the tithes in their parishes had been restricted. In many cases, religious corporations or lay patrons had obtained the right to nominate persons to the different cures as well as the right to collect the major part of the tithes, or grosses dîmes. Hence the collector of tithes, or gros décimateur, could be a chapter of canons, a collegiale, an abbey, a priory, or a local lay patron. Moreover, royal edicts had reduced the extent and value of the tithes that a curé could collect. Since the Royal Decree of 1686, the curés had been given the right to choose between the insignificant part of the tithe that was left to them and a sort of pension alimentaire, or alimony, which in 1789 was fixed at 700 livres for curés and 350 livres for vicaires. This pension was paid either by the bishop, if he had the right of appointment to the curé, or by the gros décimateur; the name given the pension was the portion congrue.[1] Estimates of the number of curès à portion congrue in 1789 run generally at about three-fourths of the total.[2]

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1. Congru, according to the edition of the Dictionnaire de l'Académie Française of 1798, signifies: Suffisant, convenable.

2. C. Meignan, "Le clergé de campagne avant la Revolution," Le Correspondant, Vol. LXXVI, 1878, p. 420; Edmond Préclin, Les Jansénistes du XVIIIème siecle et la constitution civile du clergé, (Paris, 1929), p. 380.

Regular canons, in making appointments to the holders of the cures at their disposition, gave the apointee the title of prieur-curé; and the prieur-curé could be removed from his benefice if the canon wished. The Benedictines kept the title of curé primitif for themselves in their appointments and named a vicaire perpetuel, who could not be removed from office. The abuses within this system of appointments and the villainies of the canons and curés primitifs form a leitmotif that recurs time and again in the curé literature on the eve of the Revolution.

There existed then in 1789 two types of benefices for curés: the cure à bénéfice, in which the title-holder was named by the bishop and received the tithes of the parish; and the cure à portion congrue, in which the holder was named by a person other than the bishop who collected the tithes and maintained the curé and his assistants, the vicaires, if there were any. In addition, the curés had the right to collect the novales, or new tithes, which were levied on newly cultivated lands and lands newly planted with fruit trees. And the curé à portion congrue enjoyed as a supplement the right to a presbytery and to a garden connected with it. Repairs to these and to the chancel and choir of the parish church and the costs of furniture, ornaments, and books were to be paid by the gros décimateur.[1]

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1. Much research remains to be done in departmental archives, and in the records of episcopal visits before an ac-

If it is true that the clergy on the eve of the Revolution were hardly united as a social order--for the divisions within the clergy corresponded in the main to the divisions of French society itself--it is nevertheless evident that one principal unifying element was the circumstance that the clergy represented the Church, which was viewed as a perfect society constituting a whole constitution and which, through its divine institution

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curate picture of the fiscal condition of the parish clergy in France can be drawn. G. Beaurin in "Les curés de campagne au XVIIIeme siecle," Le Correnpondant, Vol. CXLVII, 1887, p. 1102; Vol. CXLIX, pp. 151-172, points out some of the difficulties in generalizing about the income of curés. Beaurin, in this study of four parishes, was one of the earliest writers to describe the sorded side of the fiscal situation of the curés. Earlier articles, such as the one by the Bishop of Châlons, Mgr. C. Meignan, supported the general ivew of the mediocrity of the income of the rural clergy. Opposing the views of Beaurin and Meignan is that of a contemporary of theirs, the Abbé Delarc, who would have us believe that the situation of the curé a portion congrue was not so deplorable and that personal need counted less amongst the lower clergy as a cause of discontent than the inequality of distribution within the clergy of the great revenues of the Church; see Abbé Delarc, L'église de Paris pendant la Révolution Française, 1789-1801 (Paris, 1895-1898), Vol. I, passim. Pierre de Vaissière in several writings based on the correspondence in the Archives Nationales of the clergy with the Agence Générale de Clergé seems convinced of relative misery of the rural curés. See especially "L'état social des curés de campagne au XVIIIème siècle d'apres la correspondance de l'Agence Générale de Clergé aux Archives Nationales," Revue de l'histoire de l'église de France, Vol. XIX, 1933, pp. 23-53; and, by the same author, Les curés de campagne de l'ancienne France (Paris, 1867). Warning, however, of the dangers of writing a history of the curés based primarily upon their complaints, Professor Gabriel Le Bras in a review of the latter work remarked judiciously: "It is equally deplorable to represent the lower clergy as an assembly of saints as it is to show them a piteous crowd." Revue de l'histoire de l'église de France, Vol. XIX, 1933, p. 542.

was not subject to change.

In the spiritual realm, the clergy functioned as representatives of the Church. Yet in the world of temporal affairs some members of the clergy--and, in particular, the lower clergy --exercised important civil functions in society as representatives of the government, a rôle which they played apart from the sacerdotal, yet one traditionally connected with it. As an officer of the civil State, the parish curé was required to prepare for Catholics certificates recording births, marriages, and deaths. In addition, the education of the young at the primary and secondary levels remained in the hands of the Benedictines, the Dominicans, the Oratorians, and other clerical orders. Although public welfare had been secularized in the sixteenth century, the clergy still carried out most of the charity work amongst the poor of the kingdom. Historically, one of the most significant missions of the clergy in society had been to defend the ideas of order and social peace. It was through the parish priests, who by their position came in daily contact with the masses, that this mission was carried on at the practical level.

The double rôles of the lower clergy and the double loyalties the rôles entailed, the relationship of the rôles and loyalties to the question of the Church's wealth, and their effect on the relation of the lower clergy to other elements in

French society became, as we shall see, preoccupying themes in the growing pamphlet agitation on the eve of the Revolution. The letter of a Curé d'Hénouville in this connection is rather typical of the complaints and requests formulated by many curés for aid with the fiscal problems that still entangled them in the feudal system of obligations. Exasperated with the bitter attacks made upon the clergy prior to 1784, this curé emphasizes in a significant passage the positive rôle of the lower clergy as defenders of order and disclaims at the same time any desire for temporal power or great wealth. "The curés," he writes, "are not of that portion of people in the State who are indifferent. For they contribute greatly to the maintenance of good order and of religion, which is the basis of it. . . . We repeat continually from our pulpits to render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's. Yet attempts are still made to eliminate us."

The matter of the great wealth of the first estate was one that responsible members of the clergy could not ignore in the decade before the Revolution. The Curé d'Hénouville and his colleagues amongst the lower clergy were especially concerned with the acrid criticisms that circulated against the excesses of fortune of the privileged ecclesiastical estate. The curés were quite sensitive to these rebukes, not only because their ministry brought them into intimate contact with their flocks, but also

because many of the lower clergy believed the entire fiscal situation concerning the distribution of ecclesiastical revenues to be unjust. Again, some expressed a feeling that their prestige suffered in the eyes of their parishioners as a result of their impecunious position. There was an increasing conviction amongst the literate curés that they could not effectively fill their rôle--both spiritual and temporal--with the income they had.

Chapter I

THE MAJOR ISSUES

Over the centuries the French monarchs had carefully spelled out their theory of the relation between the temporal and spiritual powers. By virtue of the Concordat signed by Francis I and Leo X at Bologna in 1516, the popes in the eighteenth century possessed the right to levy the annates, or payments of a sum equal to the income received by a bishop or abbot from his benefice during the first year.[1] Moreover, the major rôle of the popes in decisions on questions of faith had been clearly recognized since the last years of the reign of Louis XIV.

But for all practical purposes the French king in the eighteenth century united in his person the Church and State. No individual be he ecclesiastic or not, no order be it the first or the last, no property be it sacred or profane, enjoyed an

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1. For a full treatment of this matter see especially Abbé Jules Thomas, Le Concordat de 1516 (Paris, 1910), particularly Vol. III.

exclusive place in the kingdom save by the pleasure of the king. For temporal matters, the king was the first, and unique, representative of God on earth. As such, he placed the Gallican Church under his complete protection. And no papal Bull or Church decree could be published in the kingdom or given the force of law but with the king's permission. Furthermore, through the terms of the Concordat, the kings of France enjoyed the right to nominate directly all the more important ecclesiastics in their kingdom, viz, the bishops, abbots, and priors; and by the right of régale, the monarch could name persons to all benefices in a particular diocese during the vacancy of the bishop's chair. Finally, the French monarchs denied the Roman pontiffs one power, wielded with such effect by Pope Gregory VII in the eleventh century; this was the right to loosen oaths of fidelity to the king. The famous Four Articles of 1682 had stripped the papacy in France of this prerogative.[1] Louis XVI had re-stated the principle in an arrêt du conseil of 24 May 1766 when he declared: "There is no power that, under any pretext whatsoever, can free our subjects from the inviolable fidelity that they owe to their

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1. Francois-André Isambert, Recueil général des anciennes lois françaises depuis l'an 420 jusqu'à la révolution de 1789 (Paris, 1821-1833), Vol. XIX, pp. 384-385, "Declaration de mars 1682 (Cleri gallicani de ecclesiastica potestate declaratio)".

sovereign."[1] In the spiritual realm, although the rights of the French king did not extend to the point of silencing the clergy in their teachings, they did specifically "restrict each minister from independence in performance of his [temporal] functions concerning the public order."[2]

All except perhaps the most ultramontane of the French clergy looked to the king as head of the Gallican Church. In the temporal domain, the curés in particular owed allegiance to the sovereign by virtue of their special functions in the civil order of things. This personal allegiance to the French monarchs was reinforced by the circumstance whereby increases in the portion congrue of the curés were effected through royal legislation. Thus in 1768 the stipend of priests had been increased from 300 to 500 livres and in 1786 from 500 to 700 livres.[3]

Since the Regency, the Church and Christianity had been subject to increasing attack from the philosophes and other bourgeois writers. From 1715 to about 1748 the attack was al-

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1. Ibid., Vol. XXII, p. 451, "Arrêt du conseil concernant les actes de l'assemblée général du clergé de France, Versailles, 24 mai 1766."

2. Ibid., Vol. XXII, p. 452.

3. Ibid., Vol. 22, p. 482, "Édit portant fixation des portions congrues, Versailles, mai, 1768;" Vol. 28, pp. 232-236, "Declaration concernant la portion congrue, Versailles, 2 Septembre 1786."

lusive. Fanaticism was criticised, and a "natural religion," which was often identified with Christianity, was praised. After 1748, the attack became more direct and fierce. The fanaticism and intolerance of the Catholic clergy and laity were denounced by such authors as Voltaire, Diderot, and Holbach. Revelation was questioned and ridiculed. A vague deism, advocating worship of a rational Creator and obedience to a rational morality, was propagated. As incredulity spread from aristocratic to bourgeois circles, the curés denounced in their sermons the skeptical bourgeois attitude toward faith and other religious questions.[1] In turn, certain French bourgeois writers singled out the priests for satire and scorn. The authors alleged that the curés hindered educational progress and the spread of "enlightened" ideas by championing, for example, such notions that education of the peasants tended to render them less Christian.[2] Bourgeois writers who attacked the curés defended their own personal right to read the Scripture and to decide for themselves issues such as the validity of miracles.

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1. Bernard Groethuysen, Origines de l'esprit bourgeois en France, Vol. I, L'église et la bourgeoisie (Paris, 4th edition, 1950), x-xii, 9, 10, 11, 17, 28, 29, 30, 31-40, 41, 43, 44.

2. See Boudon, La science sacrée du catéchisme (S.l., 1749), pp. 82 ff.; see also La religion chrétienne méditee dans le véritable esprit de ses maximes, S.l., 1760), V, 275 ff.

However, in this mounting anticlerical criticism, Voltaire, Rousseau, Turgot, and even Diderot championed the cause of the curés. Voltaire and Rousseau especially were ardently pro-curé. However their favorable opinion of the functions of the curé in society was based upon a practical and utilitarian view of the curé's rôle. Their views on the priestly functions sprang quite naturally from their views on society and religion. Deists both, they conceived of religion in natural terms, that is, in terms of the practice of virtue according to the conscience men have received from God. Of the two, Rousseau is the most sincere in his religious beliefs and in the Profession de foi affirms his belief in a benevolent deity regulating the universe, in an immortal soul, and in an innate conscience guiding men to virtuous and just acts. Education and good example become the key weapons in the improvement of individual, as we see in Rousseau's treatise on education, Emile, of which the Profession de foi is but an excursus. The two writers envisage the curé not primarily as an organ of the Catholic Church or as administrator of the holy sacraments, but rather as a practical preceptor of his parishioners, who occupies himself both with charitable work amongst them and with moral instructions designed to goad their consciences to follow the paths of virtue and justice.

Voltaire, in his essay on the "curé de campagne" outlines the practical framework in which he placed the travails of the priesthood. Upholding the need of the curés for an honest subsistence, he writes: "A curé, what shall I say, a curé? an imam? a talapoin? -- should have an honest living. A priest in any country should be nourished from the altar because he serves the Republic."[1] And further: "But let no fanatical rascal declare that I put a curé and a Brahman on the same level, or that I associate the truth with imposture. I am merely comparing services rendered to society; I compare only the pains with the salary."[2] Moreover, continues Voltaire, "I say that anyone who exercises a painful function should be paid by his co-citizens; I do not say that he should be excessively well off, dine like Lucullus, nor be insolvent like Clodius."[3] The priest, in return for an honest living, is to play a rôle in society that resembles that of a tutor in the household of a citizen. His function is "to teach, to pray, to set an example."[4] By no means is he to indulge in useless controversies of a theological nature; rather, he is to preach good morals and to show through his prac-

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1. Voltaire, OEuvres complètes (Paris, 1883-1885), Vol. 18, p. 303.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid., Vol. 20, article "Prêtres", p. 272.

tical work in the parish that he is a good, wise, and wordly man, one who would not, for instance, forbid the peasants to work on Sunday from excessive scruples.[1]

In return for his good services, the curé is to receive an ample income and is to be freed from bitter financial worries. Voltaire complains in particular of the economic plight of the isolated country curé, who, for want of sufficient resources, is forced to haggle and quarrel with his parishioners over the collection of the tithe and of other fees. He paints a darker picture still of the particular plight of the curés à portion congrue - men who are at the mercy of the gros décimateurs and who are cruelly exploited by them. Thus the sage of Ferney, denouncing what he considers an outrage and an injustice in the Church, writes bitterly: "I pity even more the curé à portion, who is paid the unbelievable salary of 40 ducats by the monks called gros décimateurs to go and perform the most disagreeable functions throughout the whole year -- sometimes three or four miles away, by day or night, in sun or rain, snow or ice. . ."[2]

If the words of Voltaire rang out as clear denunciations of the plight of the curés, those of Rousseau tolled softer but

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1. Voltaire, OEuvres complètes (Deux Ponts, 1791-1792), Vol. 56, article "curé de campagne", p. 51 ff.

2. Ibid., vol. 56, p. 52.

with perhaps more effect. Although both Voltaire and Rousseau were striving for the same end, namely, to turn the priests from vain theological disputes to practical work amongst their flocks as moral preceptors to the masses, the two authors nevertheless state their ideas in quite different ways. Voltaire's words, lucid and sharp, were the marks of the great propagandist that he was, and furthermore, showed the breadth of his vision and learning. Rousseau entered vicariously and sympathetically into the situation of the humble priest and, expressing his ideas through the words of the vicaire savoyard, offered his points subtly and poignantly.

Born "poor and a peasant," the vicaire in La profession de Foi tells that he was destined to cultivate the land as had his father and generations before him. But in his family it was decided that it would be nobler if he learned to earn his bread in the profession of priest, and a way was found to give him a certain education. In the course of his studies there was no question of his learning what was "truly good and useful," but rather his parents and he were interested only in his mastering that which was requisite for his ordination. "I learned," he declares, "what they wanted me to learn. I said what they wanted me to say. I signed up as they wanted me to. And I was

made a priest."[1] The picture that emerges of the vicaire in Rousseau's lines is one of a peasant in a priest's frock, little changed by the rote mastery of the rudiments of an ecclesiastical education.

It had been the vicaire's ambition to become a curé; yet as a result of a youthful and amorous caprice he had lost the favor of his bishop and remained a vicar. In the passage that follows, he speaks of his ambition and gives his concept of the rôle that the curé should play in society. "My good friend," he declares, "I can think of nothing so wonderful as to be a curé. A good curé is a minister of goodness just as a good magistrate is a minister of justice. . . Oh, if ever in these mountains I had some cure of good people to serve, I should be happy. For I believe that I would bring happiness to my flock. I would

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1. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, La profession de foi d'un vicaire savoyard; critical edition by Pierre-Maurice Masson [Fribourg, 1914]; in the series Collectanea Friburgensia, New Series, Fasicule XVI (No. 25 of the collection); p. 41. In one of the series of pamphlets launched against the clergy in 1767-68. Baron d'Holbach, the most severe critic of the priesthood, picks up this theme of Rousseau's. Declaring the priests incapable of instructing others because of their faulty education, he says: "on les envoye à nos universités, où communément ils sont élèves par charité; là de bonne heure on leur fait prêter des serments, signer des formulaires, et ils jurent de croire les choses avant de les connaître." L'esprit du clergé ou le christianisme primitif vengé des entreprises et des excès de nos prêtres modernes [Londres, 1767.], I, 34.

not make them wealthy, but I would share their poverty. . . I would bring them to love that concord and equality which dispels misery or at least makes it always bearable. In my lessons I would emphasize less the spirit of the Church than the spirit of the Évangile, wherein the dogma is simple and the moral sublime in which one finds little about religious practices and much about works of charity."[1]

Voltaire, though concerned with a more sophisticated parish than the rustic Savoy cure of Rousseau's vicaire and interested more in the elimination of dogmatical and theological disputes, emphasizes also the utilitarian side of a priest's duties in his delightful dialogue[2] between two old friends, Ariston and Théotine, who discuss the decision of the latter to enter the ministry and the prospects that await him in this profession. Théotine, an educated man, will place his learning at the disposal of his flock to aid the faithful with their daily problems. With an almost pompous air Théotine declares: "I have studied enough law to prevent my poor parishioners, as much as I can, from ruining themselves in legal action. Moreover, I am

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1. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, op. cit., pp. 425-426.

2. The dialogue is found in the "Catéchisme du curé" from the Dictionnaire philosophique in Voltaire's OEuvres complètes (Paris, 1883-1885), Vol. 18, pp. 77-88.

enough of a doctor to give them elementary advice on medical affairs."[1] Further on, he adds: "I shall try to form honest people and to be honest; yet, in no way shall I help form theologians and I shall myself be as little a theologian as possible."[2]

If Voltaire and Rousseau thought of the curés rôle in pragmatic and practical terms, it was Turgot, Royal Intendant at Limoges and later Minister of Finances from 1774 until 1776, who implemented the idea through his use of the curés as local agents, that is, as extensions of the civil administration. While intendant at Limoges, Turgot thought of using the curés as his natural sub-delegates. The editor of his collected works, DuPont de Nemours,[3] quotes Turgot as declaring that he considered himself fortunate to have in each parish "a man who had received some education and whose functions in themselves inspired in him ideas of justice and charity."[4] The first evidence of Turgot's decision came in May, 1762, when he addressed a circulaire aux curés to ask for their co-operation and support. Turgot phrases his appeal in the following terms: "No one is in a better position than Messieurs the curés, by their position, by the distinguished education that their position demands, and by the

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1. Ibid., pp. 85-86. 2. Ibid., pp. 86-87.

3. A.R.J. Turgot, OEuvres complètes (Paris, 1807-1811), Du Pont de Nemours, editor, Vol. V, p. 364.

4. Ibid.

confidence that their ministry inspires amongst the populace to know the situation of the people and the means to improve it; and, as we must have no other goal for our administration than the latter, it is certain that they can furnish us with precious help and information."[1]

More explicitly still, the intendant shows in a later passage that he believes in the utility of the curés' work and that he desires to make use of their services: "Persuaded that their zeal embraces all areas that touch upon the public good and that all services to be rendered to men are in the province of their charity, I propose to have recourse to them often to request their advice on divers subjects or to pray them to aid me in rendering justice to their parishioners."[2]

In subsequent circulars to the curés requesting information on conditions with regard to cattle, diseases, taxes, and other such practical concerns, Turgot put into practice his conviction that the priests should be used as an arm of the royal

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1. A.R.J. Turgot, OEuvres (Paris, 1912-1923), Gustave Schelle, editor, Vol. II, p. 169.

2. Ibid., Vol. II, p. 170.

administration.[1] Yet it was not until the famine years of 1770-1771 that he employed them in a dramatic and striking way. In the midst of the terrible crisis of 1770 he decided that the curés should be made the chief agents for the setting up and administering of the charity bureaux he was establishing in his intendancy to cope with the misery of the masses.[2] By thus confiding to the curés such important positions within the civil administration in time of crisis, Turgot gave open recognition to the utility and capabilities of the priests in his district and to their potential value as secular instruments of the government.

Again, in the articles of the Encyclopédie could occasionally be found expressions of sympathy and support for the lower clergy, especially for their economic demands.[3] The editor, Denis Diderot, often one of the severest critics of the priesthood, shared one essential belief of his fellow contributors, Voltaire, Rousseau, and Turgot, toward the clergy, namely, that a curé should be concerned primarily with the improvement of the

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1. Ibid.; see also Deuxième circulaire aux curés, Vol. II, pp. 174-177; Troisième circulaire aux curés, Vol. II, pp. 177-179; Circulaire aux curés (les vingtièmes), Vol. II, pp. 179-183.

2. Instructions lues à l'Assemblée de Charité de Limoges (Bureaux et ateliers de charité), Ibid., Vol. III, pp. 205 ff.

3. See Denis Diderot, Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers, par une société de gens de lettres (Paris, 1751-1765), articles "Curés," Vol. IV, pp. 573-575; "Portion congrue," Vol. XIII, pp. 148-149.

moral standards of the masses through the example of an austere --if not saintly--private life. Diderot's ideas on the curé's rôle as a regulator of morals followed logically from the conviction he shared with Rousseau, that man is naturally inclined to virtue but that his innocent nature has been perverted by society and, in particular, by bad education, bad laws, and bad examples.

Whereas Diderot, in such works as the Suite de l'Apologie de l'Abbé de Prades, excels Rousseau and Voltaire in the quality of his philosophical abstractions and his scientific approach to philosophical problems, he displays considerably less subtlety in the opinions he expresses upon the French ecclesiastics. For Diderot sees the priests as essentially either good or bad, as saints or hypocrites. He praises the good and condemns the bad with the object of reforming the priesthood through criticism. Diderot feels that in the primitive Church the priests were early corrupted by the handling of money for charitable purposes.[1] The first estate, he believes, has grown too wealthy; this wealth must be reduced through a marked increase in the

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1. For Diderot's ideas on the clergy see Denis Diderot, OEuvres complètes (Paris, 1875), especially "Plan d'une université; quatrième faculté d'une université: Faculté de théologie," Vol. III, p. 511 ff.; and "Discours d'un philosophe à roi," Vol. IV, p. 33 ff.

don gratuit paid to the State and through sale of its land to pay the *don*.[1]

If at times Diderot's judgements upon the character of the French Catholic clergy seem blunt, his views upon the equivocal nature of the position that the priest occupied in eighteenth-century society are remarkably acute. The image he evokes in his *Plan d'une université* of the delicately-balanced place that the priest holds in the scheme of things is drawn with concise yet vivid strokes. "The priest," he states, "good or bad, is always an equivocal being, a being suspended between heaven and earth, very like unto that figure which the physicist causes to rise or descend at his discretion, as he inflates or deflates the air buble in his hand. Now allied with the people against the sovereign, now with the sovereign against the people, the priest bothers to pray to the gods only when he is least worried by the situation."[2]

This equivocal nature of the curés position seems an important and neglected feature of the history of the clergy in the eighteenth century, for there appears in the writing of a number of curés prior to the Revolution an expression of tension between the temporal and the spiritual rôle that they play in society. This tension, or conflict, was polar in character, as they were pulled by loyalty to the Church as priests on the one

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1. *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 512.
2. *Ibid.*, Vol. III, p. 510.

hand, and, on the other, by loyalty to the State as citizens and civil functionaries.

In the decade before the Revolution the writings of the Abbé Henri Reymond (1737-1820), a young priest from Dauphiné, furnish the earliest indication that a priest could view his functions as double. Abbé Reymond led the drive amongst the curés of Dauphiné and Provence to obtain both economic reforms and recognition of their importance within the hierarchy. In 1776, he wrote and published a most important work entitled Droits des curés et des paroisses, considérés sous leur double rapport, spirituel et temporel, a work which became a sort of handbook for the curés in their economic struggle and which soon appeared in a second edition in 1780 and later, under a new title, in a third edition of 1791.

Reymond's object in writing in 1776 was to appeal to the king to restore the greater part of the rights--both spiritual and temporal--that, he alleged, had been stripped from the curés of many decades. Reymond declared that the Church courts had not heeded the demands of his colleagues, and hence they now sought the protection of the king himself. The Droits des curés was designed to set before the king the abuses suffered by the pastors of the second order--the curés-- and to state thereagainst the complaints that they had formulated. Reymond's work set the tone for the economic demands of the lower clergy until the time

when they switched their ultimate allegiance from the king to the States-General sitting at the king's call.

As one of his essential themes, Reymond reiterates an idea popularized by Voltaire and Rousseau in the Dictionnaire philosophique and the Vicaire savoyard, published respectively twelve and fourteen years before the Droits des curés: the idea is that the curés through their daily ministry exert an important and salutary influence in maintaining order in France and in preserving and raising moral standards amongst the French people. Reymond argues, in accord with the Savoyard vicaire, that the happiness of the people is the object of the ministry of the curés.[1] The functions of the curé place him in intimate contact with the masses, and he is thus in a position to see the causes of good and evil in the lives of the people and to influence them for the better. "However little patriotism or intelligence he may have," writes Reymond "the curé acquires easily an intimate knowledge of the condition of the people because this knowledge springs quite naturally from a reasoned observance of certain matters that occur under his eyes and of which he is often obliged to take notice."[2] The curés are useful to the king because they

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1. Abbé Henri Reymond, Droits des curés et des paroisses, considérés sous leur double rapport, spirituel et temporal [Paris, 1776. 1ère partie: Pp. 146; 2ème partie: Pp. 161], I, 35.

2. Ibid., I, 37.

know and understand the people and can promote both their happiness and the maintenance of order in the kingdom.

In the course of his argument, Reymond speaks of the curés as "public persons" and declares that few "public persons" know the people so well and that few are so well placed to influence them.[1] Although Reymond does not here extend his discussion to the rôle of the curé as citizen as opposed to his rôle as priest, he nevertheless frames his statements within the context of public service; and to think of the curé as a public person, as Reymond does, is to border upon thoughts of the curé as primarily a civil person--as citizen or functionary of the State--the position, that is, which was taken by Voltaire and one toward which the curés who follow Reymond moved during the protest movement of the period 1776-1789.

In the first section of the Droits Reymond lays the foundation for his arguments upon the utility of the curés; he discusses therein the inherent dignity and importance in the hierarchy of the pastors of the second order and describes the means employed throughout the centuries to deprive them of their ec-

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1. Ibid., I, 37. He writes: "Disons-le avec confiance: il est peu de personnes publiques à qui leur état et leurs fonctions journalières fournissent autant d'occasions de s'éclairer sur les différentes causes du bien et du mal-être des hommes."

clesiastical and spiritual rights. In developing his argument, Reymond drew upon certain fundamental tenets of the Jansenist-Richerist school as evolved within the eighteenth century. Jansenism, the doctrine associated with the name of Cornelius Jansen (1585-1638), was an austere belief based primarily upon the Augustinus of Jansen and of which five propositions (total depravity, irresistible grace, loss of free will, predestination, and limited atonement) had been condemned by Pope Innocent X in 1653. Severely persecuted by Louis XIV, Jansenism and its adherents appeared to decline and disappear in France. Yet, as Professor Edmond Préclin has shown in his brilliant thesis, Jansenism was not merely a phantom in the eighteenth century, as was previously thought, but developed and propagated within itself the germs of a second heresy, Richerism, which would in the end absorb if not devour it.[1] This second Jansenism, deprived of the support of many prelates, linked itself with the lower clergy and flattered their instincts of independence. And although the program of temporal-economic demands of the lower clergy developed independently under the influence of political and economic conditions, the spiritual convictions of the Jan-

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1. Edmond Préclin, Les jansénistes du XVIIIème siècle et la constitution civile du clergé (Paris, 1929); see especially pp. 1-2, 66, 106, 342-345, 361-362, 364-365, 379-380, 459-460.

senist-Richerists concerning the importance of the priest in the hierarchy provided, as it were, the audacity of conviction upon which Reymond and his followers founded their temporal demands.[1]

Reymond thus argues for a restoration to the curés of some of the privileges lost since the Middle Ages on the ground that the curés succeed the seventy-two apostles of Christ just as the bishops succeed the twelve disciples, and hence that the curés occupy a position in the hierarchy immediately after the bishops. The curés possess therefore the right to attend the divers synods and councils of the Church hitherto forbidden to them. In Reymond's view, the institution of curés is of divine law whereas that of the abbots, priors, canons, and other benefice-holders is of human law; and these human laws, in creating other benefices, have not introduced between bishop and curé an intermediary state to be occupied by the new creations. Rather, the nature of the functions of abbots and priors fixes their place in rank, and this place must be beneath that of the curés.[2]

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1. Reymond was not a Jansenist-Richerist, as Préclin has noted. His appeal was to the curé who sought reasons for an increase in the portion congrue and arguments for re-inforcing his authority in his parish and his voice in diocesan affairs.

2. Reymond, op. cit., I, pp. 1-50, passim.

The curés are subordinate prelates, and the bishops alone can legally interfere with their jurisdiction in the parishes. Other priests in the area of a parish fall under the jurisdiction of the curé. Moreover, the curés possess the inherent right to choose their own vicaires. This right, Reymond implies, has been usurped by the bishops. And yet, although usurpation is a strong term, Reymond in his comments in his passage upon the bishops--as upon them elsewhere in the work--employs a tone that is but gently reproachful, and one that contrasts greatly with the harsh and bitter notes sounded by the greater number of the chorus of curés who followed him. In periods that ring a bit of Montesquieu, he writes: "We do not claim to judge the bishops. We dare only to make one observation on one of the weaknesses of humanity: man is by nature led to extend his rights and jurisdictions."[1] The effect of the spiritual beliefs of Reymond was to exalt the position of the priest in the hierarchy as descendant of the disciples; extended logically, to cite but one example, this would entitle the curé as a "subordinate prelate," in Reymond's terms, to attend the synod and council meetings of the Gallican clergy and - of great importance - to cast votes therein that would be binding upon bishops.

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1. Ibid., I, p. 57.

In the realm of temporal affairs, Reymond is most concerned to establish that the tithe is the patrimony of the curé to be used for his maintenance, for the poor, and for the parish church; furthermore, he endeavors to show that the tithe was usurped from the curés by the cathedral chapters and by the abbeys. From this time of usurpation can be dated the origin of the portion congrue, because previously all the tithes belonged to the curés.[1] At the present time, he complains, the portion congrue has become quite insufficient as a source of revenue. Reymond argues that prices have risen sharply in the eight years since Louis XV's edict of 1768 increasing the portion to 500 livres. Yet the curés' stipend has remained the same, despite a provision in the edict that the portion be fixed on a sliding scale at the value in money of a set amount of wheat on the Paris market. The portion was to be increased as prices of wheat rose.[2] If ever the portion were increased sufficiently, the casuel forcé could be abolished and thus a prime source of irritation to the people could be removed.[3]

In Reymond's mind the discontent over the loss of the tithe and the demands for an increase in the portion congrue

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1. Abbé Henri Reymond, op. cit., II, 8.

2. Ibid., II, 15 ff.

3. Ibid., II, 20, 35.

are intrinsically connected, because the temporal wealth (biens) of the curés consists principally of the tithe of the fruits of the earth or of its replacement, the portion. Not until later would clerical writers consider their demands for recovery of the tithes and for increases of the portion in relation to larger questions. Only later would they be confronted with the question of the validity of the Church's wealth (biens) and with the attitude to be adopted in the face of increasingly serious demands for its confiscation. In 1776, however, Reymond is primarily concerned with the immediate economic plight of the curés and with the strengthening of their position in the hierarchy.

Since Reymond believes the possibilities to be good that the king and his ministry will aid the curés, the pages of the Droits exude an optimistic spirit. "These pastors," he writes, "should not be worried about their plight; it can only get better. Since the decline in the former discipline of the Church their importance and dignity have never been considered so carefully as today. . . ."[1] Nevertheless, fundamental reforms are needed: the curés should have free choice of members of the diocesan tax bureau (bureaux diocéssians or bureaux des décimes); more frequent synods should be held in the dioceses with greater curé

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1. Ibid., II, 41.

participation; the curés should pay less in décimes in proportion to their income as regulated by the tables of percentages - for they now pay proportionately more than simple benefice-holders; the plurality of benefices should be eliminated and certain benefices, the utility of which can not be discovered, should be abolished.[1] Only through these reforms can the discipline of the clergy be tightened and the key position of the curé be strengthened.

A preoccupation with the fundamental questions of the tithe and the portion congrue as the essential elements to be contested in the repartition of ecclesiastical wealth characterizes the writings of curés in the years following publication of Reymond's Droits. In a fundamental work entitled Observations sur la repartition des biens ecclésiastiques, we find repeated one of the major themes of Reymond's, namely, that the essential need is either to restore the tithe to the curé or substantially to increase the portion, measures that would provide the starting point for a renovation of the dignity of the curés' position and for a reinforcement of their rank in the hierarchy as second only to the bishops.[2]

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1. Ibid., II, 41, 93, 116, 125 ff., 154.

2. Observations sur la répartition des biens ecclésiastiques [Bruxelles, 1781. Pp. 68], passim. Some other pamphlets

The Church does not lack people to fill its rich benefices--its bishoprics, abbacies, priorships, and canonicates--but it does lack priests and vicaires, declares the anonymous author of the Observations. The shortage of curés is owing not to the fact that potential priests could enter monasteries at an earlier age than the priesthood, as was implied by the redactors of the edict establishing a commission to reform the religious orders, but rather to the attractiveness of the wealth of the idle benefice-holders and to an aversion for the poverty of the priests, the men who bear the heaviest burden.[1]

Taking up the banner of that lost cause, the tithe, the author complains like Reymond that the curés receive little or nothing from this income destined for them, and the tithe is especially precious to the curé because it is exempt from state taxation. Examine the case of those curés who are reduced to

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that reflect the basic preoccupation with the question of the tithes are: Essai historique sur l'origine des dîmes, pour parvenir à l'examen de la question: Si les décimateurs ont leur intention fondée en droit pour exiger la dîme des fruits nouveau [S.l., 1780. Pp. 114]; and by Reymond and Helié, Mémoire à consulter et consultation pour les curés de la province du Dauphiné [Paris, impr. de P. G. Simon, 1780. Pp. 108], especially pages 56 ff.; Also, Requête des curés du diocèse d'Auch, à nosseigneurs de l'assemblée générale du clergé de France [Auch, P.-P. Duprat, 1785. Pp. 17].

1. Ibid., p. 4.

the portion congrue: they have less than twenty-five sous per day to spend for food and maintenance.[1] "There is no lackey of a Gros Décimateur who does not cost more to his master to maintain,"[2] he writes. The meagerness of the portion congrue obliges the curé to levy the casuel, an odious charge and a burden upon the peasant who already pays the tithe and who is nevertheless required to pay again at times of marriage, birth, and death.[3]

Relying heavily upon Fleury's Histoire ecclésiastique[4] for his factual information, the author argues in gentle tones that historically the tithes were not established in signum universalis dominii, but that they were created to nourish the ministers of the altar, who had been thus freed from the need to cultivate the land to devote themselves entirely to their ministry. The tithes thus became the patrimony of the individual

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1. Ibid.; One livre equaled 25 sous.

2. Observations sur la répartition des biens ecclésiastiques, op. cit., p. 5.

3. Ibid.

4. Claude Fleury's Histoire ecclésiastique, the First edition of which was published in Paris in 1691 in 20 volumes, and which appeared in a number of other editions in the eighteenth century, was the standard source employed by clerical and non-clerical authors on ecclesiastical subjects in the eighteenth century. References to this work abound in the pamphlet literature.

priest to be used for the poor and for upkeep of the parish church.[1] Gradually, however, the tithes were taken over by three classes of people who to-day possess the bulk of them: the canons, the abbots or commendatory priors, and the communities of monks and nuns.[2]

The author of the Observations--in all likelihood a curé --proposes a radical reform of the administration of the tithes of the kingdom. In each diocese a Bureau of Tithes is to be created, composed of curés elected in a synod assembly and presided over by the bishop. This bureau would administer all the tithes of the diocese. In each parish there would be published (one month before harvest and for three successive Sundays thereafter) the announcement of the levy of the tithes; after this pronouncement the right to the tithes would be sold to the highest bidder and the money given to the Diocesan Bureau for distribution to the curés. Present secular holders of the tithes whose possession, though vicious, is legal would be awarded a pension for life, equivalent to the sum owed them annually after deduction of the portion congrue and other parish expenses. Curés who possess the tithes will retain them until they die,

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1. Observations sur la répartition des biens ecclésiastiques [Bruxelles, 1781, Pp. 68], pp. 8-19.

2. Ibid., p. 22.

at which time they will revert to the Bureau. The problem of abbeys and communities that are weakened by the loss of tithes could be resolved by grouping several convents together, by joining several simple benefices to them, or by suppressing outright those convents that demonstrate no evident utility. These reforms, if carried out, would permit each curé to receive from the Bureau a base salary of 1500 livres and each vicaire 800.[1]

If the above plan for the tithes represents merely a logical extension of certain of Reymond's ideas, there is little of his basic optimism surviving in the pages of the Observations. Indeed there is a note of despair that sounds at times with sharpness and at others with resounding bitterness throughout the author's discussion of the fallen dignity of the clerical position. The author believes that although the utility and the need for the curés has been clearly established, the effectiveness of their work amongst the masses is seriously impeded by the little esteem they enjoy in the eyes of the people; moreover, the status of the priesthood as a profession is so low that few worthy persons are tempted to don the surplice. To perceive that the king himself considers the curés vital instruments in the maintenance of order in the kingdom, declares the author, one has but to read the Instructions he issued to the curés in 1775.

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1. Ibid., pp. 50-57, passim.

In these he requested the curés to recall to their duties those who had been led to sedition and "to keep others of his subjects from guilt of the same."[1] Rightly enough the curés are thus to become the axis for the maintenance of order and for the reform of morals in the kingdom. But the position of the curé in the popular mind has so lost the luster and dignity owing it and the gulf between bishop and curé become so wide with the heaping of prestige upon intermediate and parasitical clerics that the curé's key position at the center has been seriously weakened.

Yet between a bishop and a curé there is almost no difference, the one being superior to the other only by ordination. The function of priest is basic and no one should be permitted to hold any benefice such as abbot or canon without first having served as priest. It is essential for the king to establish this principle as a law of the kingdom. If the status of the curé is thus raised from the depths to which it has fallen, there will be no shortage of persons entering the ministry nor will the curés suffer in their duties from a lack of prestige amongst the people.

> For [if the curés' status were raised] the priesthood would be embraced as a profession by young people of good families and even by men of the nobility who would no more blush to

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1. Ibid., p. 60.

> serve the Church and the State as an ecclesiastic of the second order than they would to serve in the army in the inferior ranks. The ranks of lieutenant and captain are the first ranks by which young people of noble blood pass to higher ranks. Why should not a similar situation prevail in the ecclesiastical order with the same equality of treatment?[1]

In 1785 the author of the Observations published another work more than six times the length of the first. Entitled L'Ecclésiastique citoyen, ou lettres sur les moyens de rendre les personnes, les établissements et les biens de l'Eglise encore plus utile à l'état et même à la religion, this pamphlet contains many of the fundamental ideas of the Observations; and yet there is in this work a slight change in tone, a change which may serve as a weathervane to indicate the flow of clerical opinion in the pamphlet literature.

The title, Ecclesiastical Citizen, chosen by the author is in itself an implicit suggestion of the desire of certain clerics as citizens to reform the Church and to render it more useful to the State and to the cause of the Catholic religion. The tendency of some clergy increasingly to view in their capacity as citizens the questions of reform within the Church developed in response to a complex pattern of causes and of changes in social and economic conditions. Amongst these would certainly

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1. Ibid., p. 63.

figure the cumulative effect of the trenchant attacks upon all ecclesiastics by men like d'Holbach and Diderot, writers who rejected religion in any form and who increasingly shifted their attacks from general abuses within the Church and intolerance to criticism of the priesthood. The basic distrust of the priesthood is expressed by d'Holbach in Le christianisme dévoilé when he states: "In every Christian sect the priest occupies a power that can but become harmful to the State."[1] Yet d'Holbach's bitter view of the priest appears most clearly in his later works, such as L'esprit du clergé ou le christianisme primitif vengé des entreprises et des excès de nos prêtres modernes, and Les prêtres démasqués, which were published respectively in 1767 and 1768 and which circulated illicitly in France for years afterwards.[2] Diderot, in attacking "bad" priests, denounces them as "enemies of reason and abettors of ignorance" and accused them further of being "proud, cruel, secretive, and intolerant." "Their avidity, their ambition, their intrigues, their bad morals" writes Diderot, "have been more harmful to religion than

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1. [d'Holbach], Le christianisme dévoilé; par feu M. Boulanger [Londres, 1756], p. 247.

2. [d'Holbach], L'esprit du clergé ou le christianisme primitif vengé des entreprises et des excès de nos prêtres modernes [Londres, 1767], see especially, pp. 33, 34, 37; [d'Holbach], Les prêtres démasqués [Londres, 1768], see pp. 141-143, 154.

all the effects of incredulity."[1]

Replying to such critics primarily as a Catholic citizen and not as a priest, the author of L'Ecclésiastique citoyen attempts a forthright answer. The enemies of religion, he says, confuse the faults of man with those of the doctrine, "as if the weakness of the former could subtract from the sanctity of the latter."[2] It is necessary for Catholics to show that they do not place the blame for the faults of man upon the work of God and to demonstrate that they ardently hope under the aegis of the best of princes for a salutary reform within the Church. At the same time, perhaps as a result of the failure of the General Assembly of the Clergy of 1780 to do anything effective for the lower clergy in the face of creeping inflation, the tone of the author's comments upon the need for reforms is more urgent, more revolutionary, and less hopeful than in his earlier writing.

Implicitly, the author assumes--as do other ecclesiastical writers of the day--that Louis XVI is badly informed of conditions in his kingdom. Once the true and deplorable situation of the clergy is made known to him, His Majesty can and will institute the necessary reforms. For in the words of Proverbs: "le

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1. Denis Diderot, OEuvres complètes (Paris, 1875), III, p. 511.

2. L'Ecclésiastique citoyen, ou lettres sur les moyens de rendre les personnes, les établissements et les biens de l'Église encore plus utile à l'état et même à la religion [Londres, 1785. Pp. 480], p. v.

regard du roi fait cesser tous les abus." The return of the tithes to the parish clergy is still the main theme of his writing; from this reform solutions to other vital matters would flow. In phrases sharpened perhaps by the famine of 1785, he denounces the canons, abbots, and monks who "have wormed themselves into the innards of the Church" and "who eat the bread of the curés and of the poor."[1] The usurpation of the tithes, he states, is the chopping block for the incredulous and heretic alike; the object of indignation of all good pastors; the cause of the inutility of a great number of priests and of the rarity of true evangelical workers.

The whole nation speaks of the need to help the curés. Even the philosophes, so divided on most issues, are all agreed on the necessity to increase the income of the curés.[2] The bishops themselves begin to discuss it.[3] "The time has come; light has been shed on the matter; the spirit of justice and

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1. Ibid., pp. 31-32.

2. Ibid., p. 41.

3. Ibid. The author refers here, no doubt, to men like Loménie de Brienne, Archbishop of Toulouse, who convoked a synod in his diocese to discuss both the plight of the curés and the situation of the décimateurs and to consider the union of benefices. His action was prompted by the recommendations of the Assembly of the Clergy of 1780. Cf. Actes du synode, tenu à Toulouse au mois de novembre 1782 [Toulouse, s.d. Pp. 182] passim.

truth increases every day. . . it is essential that a revolution take place."[1] The clergy cannot reform itself: it is for the king and his ministry to carry out the needed reform.[2] Yet a simple increase of 200 livres in the portion congrue will not suffice. The price of wheat has increased by two-thirds since the edict of 1768, and consequently the portion should have gone up to 900 livres plus the additional 100 livres accorded for the abolition of the novales. Even this increase is insufficient: the minimum pay for a "curé de campagne" should be 1500 livres with 800 for his vicaire.[3] As outlined in the Observations, this salary should be paid by the Bureau Diocéssain, and instead of the clergy's contributing the don gratuit at periodic intervals, the Bureau should pay the vingtième to the government as taxation. This contribution would not be deducted, however,

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1. L'Ecclésiastique citoyen, p. 44.

2. Ibid., p. 238.

3. Ibid., pp. 292-293. The works by Ernest Labrousse serve to substantiate this statement of inflation in the yearly price of wheat. From 1765 to 1770, the yearly average price of wheat in France (in livres per setier) rose from 17 to 29. By 1785, it had declined to 23, which is nevertheless a substantiation of the statement that the increase had approached two-thirds. See the price charts in Vol. I of Ernest Labrousse, Esquisse du mouvement des prix et des revenus au XVIIIème siècle (Paris, 1932), 2 vols. See also Vol. I of La crise de l'économie française à la fin de l'ancien régime et au début de la Revolution (Paris, 1943).

from the curé's minimum stipend.

Not only will these reforms in the structure of the income of the curés permit them to live more comfortably, but, more important from the king's viewpoint, they will thus be enabled to render great benefits to the State by relieving the lot of the poor of the kingdom. One of the principal roles of the curé is to distribute charity in the parish to that "most numerous and most suffering portion of the king's subjects."[1] Through their paternal ministry the curés could do much to bring stability to the kingdom: each parish is a family of which the curé is the father. In a direct address to the king, the author implores:

> You have 40,000 men in your kingdom, Sire, specially devoted to you; 40,000 men who can more efficaciously assure the obedience of your subjects than the 300,000 you have under arms; 40,000 men who can prevent or soften more legal conflicts than all your courts of justice could judge; 40,000 men who are in a position to procure more help for the unfortunate than the opulence of all the richest and best intentioned citizens.[2]

That the author viewed with jealousy and bitterness the opulence and social prestige enjoyed by the abbots, priors, and canons is evinced by more than one passage in the work. The people take no interest in the sad discussions of the rights of the curés, of their needs, of their conditions of work, he writes. In this world of ours those who command attention are those who

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1. Ibid., p. 4.
2. Ibid., p. 28.

possess--even if it be at the expense of others. A rich benefice-holder, an elegant abbé, a prior, or canon with a great income--these are the men who sparkle in society. These privileged beings glide amongst all classes of citizens, eat the fat of the earth, and are accorded all the honors. A simple curé de village is "the servant of these men."[1] Within the Church we, the curés, have a rank that they are forced to respect, but in the world it is quite different: they are everything and we are nothing. They steal the bread of the poor and are honored for it. Their institution, of human and not divine origin, places them after the curés in the hierarchy. Yet they are esteemed in society and the curés are not. "Wealth alone has created these ecclesiastical dignitaries; but we know that wealth can never create ranks in the house of God."[2]

With respect to the general question of the utility of the clergy, the author affirms that without reform the clergy cannot be defended against attacks. Opulence and privileges have denatured the simple ideas of the primitive clergy and have perverted all. In past times there were only priests and assistant priests, and these were respected. To-day titles of honor and wealth, coupled with idleness, have brought upon the clergy

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1. Ibid., pp. 3-3. 2. Ibid., p. 98.

the charges of non-utility. "For myself, I am persuaded that in considering the greater part of ecclesiastical establishments such as they exist at present, the greater number of individuals who comprise them would not dare defend their group on grounds of utility."[1]

To students of eighteenth-century France it is common knowledge that the attack on the Altar long preceded that on the Throne. Commencing with the gentle gibes of Montesquieu's Lettres persanes and gaining force with the caustic pricks of Voltaire's Lettres philosophiques, the attack upon established religion burst forth with brutal fury with the publication in 1770 of Baron d'Holbach's Système de la nature. Yet if the lines can be traced with ease of the general campaign waged against the Church by the philosophes, it is more difficult to determine just when began the attack in force upon the long-invincible front of the Church's property. Certainly by the spring of 1789 the assault had about reached its peak; but as early as 1783 there had appeared brochures which fired upon the sacred biens of the Gallican clergy.

One of these brochures was the Réformé du clergé, published in 1783 by a lay writer who displays a certain knowledge

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1. Ibid., p. 45.

of Rousseau's Du contrat social and of Helvétius' De l'homme. Of the many ideas that the author advances in his work, the most radical is his proposal for outright confiscation of all Church property. This proposal springs in great part from his basic fear of the wealth, the power, and the independence of the clerical body. "A group," he writes "that claims independence from the sovereign and that recognizes a foreign chief, this group--if it be rich and powerful in the State--will become dangerous . . ."[1]

At the heart of the writer's arguments lies the conviction that the political status and the apostolic character of the clergy have been confused with each other. "Herein lies the basis of all our errors. For we must always distinguish between these two existences that are so different."[2] To the clergy he makes the declaration that their reign is not of this world and that hence they possess nothing in the State. "Yet you have acquired property and possessions and in this way have become civil and political members of the State."[3] Here we find the crux of the author's theoretical argument; for, in his view,

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1. Réformé du clergé; par l'auteur du c.c. [S.l. (Conclue, decidée et imprimee en Sorbonne et aggréée par le S.P. le Pape) 1783. Pp. 72], p. 3.

2. Ibid., p. 5.

3. Ibid., p. 6.

it is through the possession of property alone that the clergy have acquired civil personalities as members of the State. The author would deprive them of this civil status and return them to their apostolic simplicity. Once their civil status was negated, the clergy would be confirmed in their official legal status as morts civils, denying them individual rights either to own or to legate goods of any sort.

Yet once their property is taken by the king, the clergy are not to be completely abandoned, for their utility has already been proven. Thoroughgoing reforms are to be carried out in the hierarchy to double the number of curés and to increase their wages. The total number of the clergy in general, however, would be reduced from 200,000 to 80,000 with the less useful elements, such as the canons and monks, being weeded out.

Of singular interest is the author's expressed conviction that only when a priest is driven to meddle in temporal affairs does he become a dangerous agent in society. "Misery makes the priest fanatical, opulence makes him independent; the one and the other render him seditious."[1] The good of the kingdom requires that these men, so useful when the means to become dangerous is deprived them, be assured an ample living, one that

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1. Ibid., p. 28.

will permit them to perform their duties without financial worries to distract them. To accomplish their mission they must be freed from all temporal interests, as in the Evangile. That the writer believes firmly in the useful and practical nature of the curés' mission is manifest in the eulogy below:

> Have you seen the humble and honest citizen pastor amidst the fiefs of these proud men [opulent and useless abbés and monks]? Formerly they had but 100 écus; now it has been raised to 500 livres. It is for this modest salary that he consecrates his hard life to the relief of his parishioners--but no, I blaspheme, it is for virtue that he does it. Virtue alone could furnish him with his more than human forces. Day and night he flies to the aid of the unfortunate, to the bed of those who are moribund. He breathes without horror the smell of death that permeates the air around them. He consoles them, fortifies them in their last moments. He witnesses their last gasps, moved, torn apart by the picture of misery all about him. . . and he often takes from his daily pittance and shares the little that he has with the sick and indigent. Twenty-eight sols: that is the recompense for this man who is nearly divine. . . .[1]

The reform of the clergy the anonymous author proposes is radical and over-simplified: it provides for a hierarchy composed uniquely of bishops and curés. In France, he writes, there are 18 archbishoprics, 118 bishoprics, and 38,990 parishes. If we give each archbishop and bishop one assistant, or vicaire général) and if we double the number of lower clergy, assign two to each parish, and hold in reserve additional curés for parishes that require more than two priests, the total number of ecclesi-

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1. Ibid., p. 30-32.

astics needed will be but 78,252. If, at the same time, we allot 20,000 livres to archbishops, 10,000 to bishops, 2,000 to vicaires généraux and urban curés, 1,500 to other curés, and 500 to vicaires, the total cost of salaries will be only 80,287,000 livres.[1] Now Helvétius in De l'homme has set the total revenues of the Church at 139,189,000 livres. If we subtract the costs of clerical salaries as given above, there remains a sum of 58,900,000 livres. This surplus should not be appropriated by the king, but should be used to free the people from the burden of the corvées, from the charges of maintaining the poor, and from the salt tax.[2]

As for the monks--useless and dissipated elements of the clergy--their establishments would be allowed to wither upon the vine as a natural result of a royal prohibition against accepting any new monks for a period of ten years. The time limit having expired, it would be possible to investigate the need for monasteries and, according to the findings, either continue or raise the prohibition.[3]

With no consideration or even mention of the existing restrictions upon the increase of Church property as established

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1. Ibid., p. 30.
2. Ibid., p. 35.
3. Ibid., pp. 60-61.

in successive royal edicts of 1666, 1749, and 1762,[1] the author censures what he considers to be an inevitable augmentation of Church holdings through the process of mainmorte. "All other properties, being continually in flux as they are, must in time become a part of the eternal property."[2] The writer's arguments justifying the right to seize ecclesiastical property are buttressed in good eighteenth-century fashion by a long and "historical treatment of the origin and accumulation of the clergy's wealth since the Middle Ages." Thus he demonstrates to his own satisfaction that the wealth of the Church belongs to the community. More fundamental to his argument still is an idea developed along lines that betray his admitted knowledge of Rousseau's political thought, namely, the concept that one political body (corps) has the right to correct the faults of another which is of later origin; that is to say, that the State possesses the authority to change institutions within the Church and, above all, institutions which are the products of "ignorance and inexperience."[3] With his right to intervene thus proven, there remains only for Louis XVI to act, for in so doing he will

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1. See François André Isambert, op. cit., Vol. XVIII, pp. 94-99; Vol. XXII, pp. 226-235; Vol. XXII, pp. 323-327.

2. Réformé du clergé, p. 7.

3. Ibid., p. 22.

greatly benefit both the State and the Church.

Partly because of pamphlets such as Réforme du clergé, the Abbé Jacques Jallet, curé from Poitou and eventually one of the leaders of the curés in the States-General, found it necessary in 1785 to discuss the whole gamut of acute problems posed by the Church's property. Like almost all clergymen, he then believed that the Church's property was of a sacred character, immune from confiscation. Yet the fact that he feels obliged to comment at all on the property question shows the defensive spirit of men of the surplice against attacks that were increasingly made upon their wealth. In his pamphlet inspired by the famine of 1785, and entitled Mémoire sur la calamité de 1785, he expresses regret that the clergy's misuse of Church wealth opens them to attack on the property question.

> If ecclesiastics had never strayed from the pious practices of priests of the primitive Church so faithful in their imitation of the saints, if they had comported themselves not like owners but as stewards of the property of the poor, the laymen on their side would have grown accustomed to thinking as sacred the property of the Church which they would have seen put to such worthy use. We should thus never have witnessed these scandalous debates grow up concerning ecclesiastical immunity. . . .[1]

Obviously shaken by the suffering he had witnessed

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1. Abbé Jacques Jallet, Mémoire sur la calamité de 1785, reprinted in Bulletin de la société des antiquaires de l'ouest (Poitiers, 1949), série 4, tome V, pp. 11 ff.

during the famine year, Jallet argues gently but forcefully that responsibility for the acute dilemma of the poor lies in great part with those ecclesiastics who diverted to their own pockets funds originally intended for charity. "In the first and most glorious centuries of Christianity," he writes "the property given to the Church by the faithful belonged not to the priests but to the poor. The Church was the society of Christians of which certain members gave up their properties to aid members of this body in their work."[1] In later times, however, the property of the Church ceased to belong to the community of the faithful and became the property of the priests. Soon the priests forgot that they were but the administrators of this wealth. To remind the holders of benefices of their obligations to the poor, Jallet would require by law that each of them leave in the parish of their benefice one-third of their income to provide for the needy. Presumably, such a measure would remove one reason for the attack on the Church's wealth.

There are few lay authors and no ecclesiastical writers in the decade prior to the Revolution who go so far as the author of the Réforme du clergé in advocating the confiscation of Church property. Amongst the laity, the notion was common enough, how-

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1. Ibid., p. 11.

ever, that the clergy should pay its share of the tax burden. Typical of opinions circulated in brochures of the times is the work Traité de secours que le clergé doit au roi pour la défense et la conservation de l'état. Written by a layman just prior to the first Assembly of Notables of February 1787 and published, it appears, while the Assembly was still in session, this work undertakes to demonstrate that in past times the clergy have been subject to State taxation and that only the piety and generosity of the present king, Louis XVI, prevent the taxing of the clergy's income. As citizens, the clergy owe taxes for the State for its conservation and defense.

The author of the Traité du secours and that of the Réforme du clergé have one point in common: the desire to tap the wealth of the men of the surplice. Yet their theories of justification are quite different. Whereas the author of the Réforme du clergé believes that the clergy enjoy no inherent civil status but have acquired it through the possession of property, the author of the Traité du secours readily grants the clergy the quality of citizens in the civil sense and then, just as promptly, requires them to pay for it. Clearly designed to influence the men of the first Assembly of Notables, the reasoning of this latter work runs as follows:

> Although the holiness of their functions have acquired for the ecclesiastics several centuries of immunities which the

> piety of our kings seems to have rendered inviolable, the clergy are not freed from the necessity of contributing to the necessary expenses of the State, as paid by the other two segments of the population, the nobility and the people, at the head of which they are placed. The exemptions and privileges on which the clergy are founded have in no way lifted their quality of citizens and have not discharged them from the responsibilities of civil life . . . .[1]

After tracing the history of the clergy, the author of the Traité du secours concludes that the property of the Church has been subject to the taxes of the State since the time of Constantine. The immunity of the clergy, of recent origin, is in his view a product of human and not divine law.[2] At present then, by grace of the king, the clergy is tax exempt. And since the clergy have the most wealth of any estate, it follows that they should be the most concerned with the conservation of the State and hence the readiest to support it. In this time of fiscal crisis, the clergy are presented with an opportunity to show their allegiance to the king and to the State through a subsidy that demonstrates their generosity.[3]

Although the author of the Traité du secours directed his writing to the men of the First Notables, sitting from Feb-

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1. Traité du secours que le clergé doit au roi pour la défense et la conservation de l'état (Signé: L.M.A.A.L.G.C.P.) [Au Vatican, le 15 mars 1787. Pp. 47], p. 5.

2. Ibid., pp. 17-41, passim.

3. Ibid., p. 47.

ruary to May 1787, the arguments employed and the appeal that it represented were aimed at the clergy. And though the first estate was officially committed to the policy that permitted no infringement upon its traditional immunities, including taxation,[1] the appeals and reasoning of men such as the author above must

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1. The over-all conduct of the fourteen prelates (seven archbishops and seven bishops) who sat in the first Assembly of Notables did little to alter the general impression that the first estate would permit no change in its historic privileges. And thus despite the presence in the group of three of those French prelates generally considered most receptive to reformist ideas, viz. Loménie de Brienne, Archbishop of Toulouse; Champion de Cicé, Archbishop of Bordeaux; and Seignelay-Colbert, Bishop of Rodez, it was nevertheless the conservative majority that set the tone, led by such men as Boisgelin de Cucé, Archbishop of Aix; Le Clerc de Juigné, Archbishop of Paris; and Dulau, Archbishop of Arles. Thus the Abbé Morellet reports that although the prelates accepted in March 1787 the concept of payment of taxes on Church lands "like those of all other citizens," they greatly weakened their concession by insisting that the administration of the levy of the décimes upon benefice-holders be conserved by their order--ostensibly to preserve the principle of a sliding scale of taxation within the clergy. [See Lettres de l'Abbé Morellet à Lord Shelburne (Paris, 1898), 15 mars 1787, pp. 222-223]. In the main, the resistance of the prelates to Calonne's reform program constituted what a pamphleteer of the day called the "soul of the opposition" within the seven Bureaux of the Notables. [Lettre d'un anglais à Paris (S. l. n. d., Pp. 28), p. 13]. Even Brienne voiced his opposition to attempts by the ministry to tamper with the historic contract between the king and the Church. [See Pierre Chevallier, editor, Journal de l'Assemblée des Notables de 1787, par le Comte de Brienne et Etienne-Charles de Loménie de Brienne, Archévêque de Toulouse (Paris, 1960), passim; also compare Jean Egret, La pré-revolution française (1787-1788) (Paris, 1962), and see especially the documents that he cites in the Arsenal dated 27 February and 5 March 1787, pp. 27-28].

have been increasingly difficult for the lower clergy, in particular, to resist.

By 1785, then, most of the main issues to confront the lower clergy in later years had been raised, although not always in the form they would later take--the double rôle of the parish priest as spiritual adviser and as civil agent, the position of the priests within the ecclesiastical hierarchy and the maldistribution of the tithe, and the question of Church property, its taxation and possible confiscation. In the minds of contemporaries, the three issues were interrrelated. For example, in their long struggle to regain the tithes and to increase their income, the curés had been especially concerned to establish their utility in French society; to demonstrate to the king and the nation their effectiveness in maintaining order in his kingdom. They made an attempt through their writings not only to show to the literate populace that they were valuable as ministers to the <u>spiritual</u> needs of their parishioners (this element was never emphasized in curé writings after 1770, and in fact, hardly ever appears) but, more important, to emphasize their rôle as a sort of tutor-social-worker, whose principal duties were moral instruction and charitable endeavors. The lower clergy, as we have said above, had been aided in their struggle with the owners of the tithes (lay and clerical alike) by certain

of the philosophe propagandists and contributors to the Encyclopédie, men such as Voltaire, Rousseau, and Turgot, who were convinced that the curés had a useful, practical rôle to play in society. The image these writers evoked of the curé as the great instructor and comforter of suffering mankind was repeated in popular works such as the Traité du Secours. Increasingly in the period 1787-1789, the authors of writings sympathetic to the lower clergy--including those by curés themselves--envisage the curés rôle in terms which, if not purely Voltairean, approach closely to those of Rousseau in the Vicaire savoyard. And if the curés played a useful and practical rôle in society as "public persons," if they considered themselves as possessing civil personalities (as they certainly did in 1789 at the time of elections to the States-General) with rights and responsibilities in society as citizens despite a legal status that denied them the possibility to own or legate personal property, then it would have been difficult indeed to resist the arguments of the author of the Traité du secours who declares that as citizens they owe taxes to the State. In 1785, as part and parcel of complete fiscal reform of the tithes, the curé-author of L'Ecclésiastique citoyen, for example, had conceded the payment of the vingtième or an equivalent tax. And as 1789 approaches, the curés increasingly express the desire that the first estate shoulder a share of the tax burden.

However, despite the increasing evidence of the government's plight, the clerical order with the upper clergy as spokesmen still would not officially reverse its traditional opposition to concessions touching its finances. The discomfort and tension of literate lower clergymen thus becomes evident during this period. Traditionally the best-liked of the clergy in the eighteenth century, the curés and vicaires are forced to bear the stigma of the unpopularity of their whole order, and they share equally in the attacks of extremists like d'Holbach and Diderot. Furthermore, they find it difficult to maintain a united front against the onset of the incredulous because of a conviction that many segments of the clerical order cannot be defended against criticisms of non-utility. United with the upper clergy in their defense of Church property, they nevertheless are too firmly committed to the reformist camp to stand firmly with the prelates or with the regular clergy on the question of clerical reform and taxation.

Chapter Two

CALONNE AND BRIENNE 1786-1787

In August of 1786, Louis XVI's Minister of Finances, Calonne, admitted at last to his sovereign that only a radical reform of the fiscal structure of the kingdom could save it from ruin. Among the proposals that Calonne submitted was the substitution of a new tax, the *subvention territoriale*, for the *vingtième*. The *subvention territoriale* would be paid in kind on the product of all lands without distinction. Calonne thus advocated the principle of equality of taxation on all property, ecclesiastical, noble, and common alike. To implement this radical proposal Calonne had resort to an extraordinary Assembly of Notables, a traditional vehicle for the king's volition. But times had indeed changed, and the distinguished assembly, convoked in February 1787 and composed of princes of the blood royal, prelates, state counsellors, presidents, attorneys general of the *parlements*, mayors, and others, turned a deaf ear to

Calonne's indictment of the disorder and injustice of the royal administration of finances and to his program of reform.

The official voice of the Church resounded loud and clear in the person of Arthur-Richard Dillon, Archbishop of Narbonne and Primate of the Gauls. Dillon, who exemplified the grand seigneur amongst the prelates and was one of the most venerated of them, reiterated the traditional stand of the higher clergy in opposing any new levy on the Church or any modification of the tax structure. He was indignant that Calonne wished to gain their approval for his project to suppress tax privileges: "Is it not mocking the nation, is it not taking its representatives for fools or liars, to assemble them here to give their sanction to plans already made?"[1] Not even the defensive disclosure of the inaccuracies of Necker's Compte Rendu could save Calonne from the fury of the episcopacy; and, reluctantly it seems, Louis XVI summoned Loménie de Brienne, Archbishop of Toulouse, to replace Calonne at the Ministry of Finances. Brienne, an arch opponent of Calonne throughout the Notables, found himself with no alternative but to pursue the reform projects of his predecessor. Obtaining a facile success in the form of a loan to tide over the government, he was nevertheless checked by the men of the

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1. Quoted in Jean Wallon, Le clergé de 89: le pape-le roi-la nation; fin de l'ancien régime (Paris, 1876), p. 123.

Notables on the question of taxation. And the Notables were subsequently dismissed in May, 1787 with nothing accomplished.

Disappointment perhaps was felt by some of the lower clergy---those who advocated equality of taxation---at the negative results of the Notables. Yet the continued frustration of the curés' desires in the meetings of the divers Assemblies of the Clergy wherein they had been represented almost uniquely by higher clergy had probably curbed hopes that their bishops would aid in the reform movement, for in the pamphlet literature of the decade prior to 1787 expressions of a lack of confidence in the Assemblies were not uncommon.[1] Nevertheless, the strong impetus given the fiscal reform proposals by Louis XVI's government had evidently encouraged some curés to expect accomplishments from the Notables. Taking heart, no doubt, from the king's increase in the portion congrue in 1786, the curé authors of a work entitled Le voeu de la raison, pour les paroisses, les curés et les pauvres, à Louis XVI, dans l'assemblée des notables de son royaume expressed confidence in the outcome of the meeting of the Notables.

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1. See, for example, such pamphlets as the following: Reymond and Helié, Mémoire à consulter et consultation pour les curés de la province de Dauphiné [Paris, impr. de P.G. Simon, 1780. Pp. 108], p. 2; and Requête des curés du diocèse d'Auch, à nosseigneurs de l'assemblée générale du clergé de France [Auch, M.-P. Duprat, 1785. Pp. 17], pp. 13-15.

A most significant statement of the collective aims of the non-Jansenist reformers amongst the literate curés in 1787, Le Voeu de la raison, opens on a happy note of praise for Louis XVI, "friend of man, enemy of luxury, bienfaituer of his subjects."[1] By royal decree of 2 September 1786 the French monarch had given legal sanction to the dilatory decision of the Assembly of the Clergy of 1785 to augment the portion congrue to 700 livres. And in a further salutary action, Louis XVI and his minister, Calonne, had summoned the Notables to meet in February 1787 and requested them to "ameliorate the revenues of the State and to assure the continued amelioration by a more equal assessment of taxes."[2] Although the curés laud the French king for his actions in implementing the increase in their income, they can find no words of praise for the assembly of their own estate that recommended the increase. Under the domination of the bishops and abbots, the Assembly of the clergy had in 1785 issued the usual perfunctory declaration which, to the minds of the authors of Le voeu, "augments weakly, according to custom, the

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1. Le voeu de la raison, pour les paroisses, les curés et les pauvres, à Louis XVI, dans l'assemblée des notables de son royaume [S.l., 1787. Pp. 133 plus iii (Table)], p. 14.

2. M. J. Mavidal and M. E. Laurent, editors, Archives parlementaires de 1787 à 1860; recueil complet des débats législatifs et politiques des chambres françaises (Paris, 1862-1913), I, 188; Hereafter cited as A.P.

income of the curés; it promises aid for the old age of pastors, yet it fails to specify what this shall be. It announces at the same time the plan to provide for the decency of the divine cult in the parishes. But the poor are not even mentioned."[1]

In a further passage that demonstrates the loss of patience of the curés in the vain words of the clerical assemblies, the authors declare with more than a touch of scorn: "Always everything for the benefice-holders, for the chapters, for the religious communities, nothing for the people, almost nothing for the churches and the pastors. Such are the results of an assembly that sees the end of the eighteenth century approach, and which is, they say, a century of humanity and light."[2]

But the king will right these wrongs. He needs but to be fully informed, to be shown how useful the curés are in society. If the king and his notables will but take the trouble to read us, declare the curés, they will find revealed to them the utility of the lower clergy.

In their view, Loménie de Brienne, Archbishop of Toulouse, strikes at the root of the problem when, in his Mandement of September 1783, he writes: "Without a better distribution of

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1. Le voeu de la raison, pour les paroisses, les curés et les pauvres, à Louis XVI, dans l'assemblée des notables de son royaume [S.l., 1787. Pp. 133 plus iii (Tables)], p. 15.

2. Ibid.

ecclesiastical wealth, it is impossible that the posts in the ministry be filled and duties faithfully acquitted."[1] For the Church of your kingdom, Sire, presents us on the one hand with a picture of immense riches, of rights of all sorts, of seigneuries, of incomes, of tithes on each parcel of land, wealth that forms the Church's patrimony and that of the poor. Yet this enormous mass of wealth, superior to the income of several kings, is concentrated in the hands of a certain number of religious communities and benefice-holders, and not a cent of charity trickles down to the parishes, not a farthing falls to the local curés to be distributed amongst the needy.

In the arguments that follow for the utility of their profession, the curés' ideas on their civil rôle emerge quite clearly. Since the argument is addressed to the king and to the notables, the stress is laid upon the practical benefits the king and the nation reap from the daily labor of the curés. The curés speak as members of society, not primarily as men of the first estate. Thus: the first great advantage enjoyed by your curés, Sire, is the great esteem in which the nation holds their profession. "[The nation] considers their profession the most necessary in the order of religion and as one of the most useful

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1. Ibid., pp. 20-21.

in the political order."[1] It is to care for your people, Sire, that we are curés. Men of the Church and of the State, we are responsible to God, to the country, and to your majesty for the position conferred upon us. In the vast spaces of the provinces there is not a vice that is not combatted, not a need that is not ministered to; only a lack of means prevents these objects from being always carried out. "The curés, subordinated to the magistrates in the civil order, should be as the eyes of your majesty to watch over their assignment; yet they could be as his hands to spread everywhere the necessities that are lacking."[2] Without being associated with the functions of the magistracy, our duty is to avert or aid the trials within the family. Without being armed as are your soldiers, we inspire fidelity. Without possessing the treasures of the mighty, we share the sorrows of indigence.

To carry out our duties without interruption, we have abandoned our families and the life of the towns. Isolated in the country, we brave the vicissitudes of air, seasons,and bad roads. For our functions take us everywhere to pray with your people, Sire, for the preservation of Your Majesty and for the prosperity of your empire.[3]

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1. Ibid., p. 25.
2. Ibid., pp. 25-26.
3. Ibid., p. 27.

But the curés are hindered in their tasks not only by their meagre income but by a certain social stigma resulting from their miserable lot. The mass of the people judge the curés by their relative economic position. "In general, the people are blind. It is to wealth that they render their homage. They are persuaded that their pastors would have a greater fortune if they merited more."[1] And the slenderness of the income of curés and vicaires is a prime reason for the diminishing number of these essential ministers. The inconvenience would perhaps be less if the bishops were not deprived of the right to name the greater number of the curés. As conditions now stand, however, the curé "marries only reluctantly a Church whose inadequate dowry discourages him."[2]

The authors view the clergy as a composite group composed of divers elements representing the different classes of society, a group composed of capable persons which yet needs reform. "It is a numerous group, rich, educated, comprising a great number of nobility and other citizens of the first classes of society, a group imposing by its character, by its enlightenment, and by the respect and confidence of the people."[3]

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1. Ibid., p. 50.
2. Ibid., p. 49.
3. Ibid., p. 57.

The reform program advocated by the curés contains six fundamental proposals: first, to increase the portion congrue of the curés to an amount in tithes varying between 1200 and 6000 livres (depending on the number of hearths served); second, to endow the curés with funds drawn from the tithes and other sources so that they will receive income like other beneficeholders and not remain simple pensioners; third, to distribute the wealth of the Church in a more equitable manner; fourth, to grant the poor a greater share; fifth, to confiscate the property of the religious communities; and, sixth, to carry out these reforms through the exercise of royal authority.[1] Accompanying the major planks in this program are minor ones that continue the general themes of re-establishing the curés and bishops as the key figures in the hierarchy and of eliminating intermediary orders. The nomination of all curés would be given to the bishops. All but cathedral chapters would be abolished. Canonicates would be conferred only upon curés who had reached sixty years of age. The latter would be salaried at between 1800 and 3000 livres. All other chapter benefices would disappear. The casuels would be abolished along with the préventions to the curia at Rome. Retired or invalid curés would receive a pension

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1. Ibid., p. 23.

of 1000 *livres*.[1]

At the heart of the curés' thinking regarding fiscal reform is the conviction that the only veritable Church property is that which is destined to the service of the altar.[2] From this proposition it follows that the property of the religious communities is not Church property, but lay property. Hence it may be confiscated by the crown because "there is not enough lay property to suffice for the charges of the State."[3] The tithes are the patrimony of the parishes, however, and those tithes possessed by the monks should be restored to the parishes along with other usurped properties. "The king has the right to dispose of the rest to recompense the servants of the State."[4] "The rest" refers here to the fiefs and *seigneuries* possessed by the religious communities.

France has applauded the reforms of Louis XVI in other realms; in finances, in the navy, the army, the tribunals, "even in your households". Now let the king reform the clergy. As proposed by clerical writers previously, the authors would have the sovereign establish bureaux of the tithes in each diocese. All ecclesiastical property would be tabulated and evaluated.

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1. *Ibid*., pp. 83-85.
2. *Ibid*., p. 75.
3. *Ibid*., p. 77.
4. *Ibid*., p. 79.

Then the bureaux could standardize the tithes throughout the kingdom. And not least important, the bureaux would pay taxes on Church property in equal fashion with other owners of property.

Throughout Le voeu de la raison runs the implicit idea that the curés are useful members of the civil order; and it is upon this usefulness to the French sovereign as his agents amongst the people, agents, that is, of charity and of good-works, of popular justice and public tranquility, that the authors base their appeal. Moreover, they demonstrate in this work their determination to aid the monarch in his fiscal plight and they expect, in turn, a reform within the hierarchy that will raise their status and their income at the expense of the monks, priors, and other intermediate clergy. And it is upon the clever definition of Church property they set forth that they build their system of reform. The pamphlet is indeed a dexterous resolution of the tensions and multiple loyalties that existed within the minds of the parish priests. To their allies among the lay reformers it grants partial confiscation of Church property; to the prelates it accords retention of property that is serving a function; to the parish priests it accords recognition and increase in pay.

The successor to Calonne, Archbishop Loménie de Brienne, had gained his position in the Ministry through his various connections at Versailles and especially through his affinity with

the Queen, for Brienne was a worldly man and an habitué of salon society. In assuming the post of *ministre principal*, he had trod the soutane-lined path of such illustrious predecessors as the Cardinals Richelieu, Mazarin, and Fleury, all men who chose to combine secular careers in government with those of pontiffs of the Roman Apostolic Church. In his own time, Cardinal Brienne (he was given his red hat in December 1788 following his resignation from the Ministry) and Archbishop Arthur-Richard Dillon and Bishop Yves-Alexandre Marboeuf, respectively of Narbonne and Autun, formed the head of the group of so-called political or administrative bishops, as distinguished from the spiritual ones who were devoted primarily to their dioceses and to the performance of their Church duties.

Among this group of political bishops may be found some of the most eloquent defenders of Church interests; yet the group also contained most of those prelates who held the most advanced views toward the Revolution. In addition to Brienne, Dillon, and Marboeuf, there were Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand-Périgord, who succeeded Marboeuf at Autun; Jerôme-Marie Champion de Cicé, Archbishop of Bordeaux; Jean-de-Dieu-Raymond-de-Cucé Boisgelin, Archbishop of Aix; and the Bishop of Rodez, de Colbert.[1]

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1. Abbé Augustin Sicard, *L'ancien clergé: les évêques avant la révolution* (Paris, 1912), pp. 108-109.

The *esprit laïc* of the political group, whatever their personal views, was caught in a remark, quoted by Talleyrand as overheard at a meeting of prelates, that "the clergy, being the most enlightened body of the kingdom, should be at the head of all administration."[1]

Stigmatizing attacks were made in the pamphlet press against political bishops, such as Brienne, and thus was added another facet to the expressed hostility of the priests for the bishops. The prelates, by their preoccupation with secular affairs, were seen as abandoning their religious pursuits only to taint themselves in the muddy stream of politics. "An administrative bishop," said one writer, "is a sort of half-breed: half sacred, half profane, dressed in his saintly robes, he exercises a philosophical apostolate, the object of which is to purge France of all her errors of government. . . . an administrative bishop is not a man of God."[2]

The author, or authors, of the *Lettres secrètes sur l'état actuel de la religion et du clergé de France*, quoted above, specifically attacked Brienne, Boisgelin, and Marboeuf as

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1. Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand, *Mémoires du Prince de Talleyrand* (Paris, 1953-55), I, 63.

2. *Lettres secrètes sur l'état actuel de la religion et du clergé de France, à M. le Marquis de. . . .* [S.l., 1781-1783. Pp. 31], pp. 6-7.

well as one group of five or six prelates to which they belonged. Charging these churchmen with a sort of conspiracy, the authors accuse them of having schemed to replace religion with reason. "They work for a unique and exclusive object, and this object is imperceptibly to insinuate philosophical indifference into the dogmas of the sanctuary, to form under the banner of religion a party against religion itself and to render it purely civil and political."[1] And further: "From this emerges the distinction established very openly between evangelical bishops and administrative bishops; no more discipline, no more studies, no more emulation, no more morals--all the young clergy will rush to embrace this new régime. . ."[2]

The accusations against political prelates leveled in the Lettres secrètes were taken up in other works such as the Requête des fidèles a nosseigneurs les évêques de l'assemblée générale de clergé de France. This pamphlet, written by an ecclesiastic to urge the General Assembly of the Clergy of May

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1. Suite des lettres à M. le Marquis de. . . [S.l., 1783, Pp. 70], p. 55. This entire series of letters published in pamphlet form is attributed by Barbier to the Abbés de Boismont and Maury, two orthodox and conservative ecclesiastics. A portion of this series was reprinted under the title Le triumvirate redevoilé à la nation assemblée [S.l., 1789]

2. Ibid.

1788 to reform the hierarchy, echoed in a general way the charges of the Lettres that a small group of impious men had gained control of the appointments to benefices and were using their influence to undermine religion.

Writing just prior to the meeting of the Assembly, the clerical author expresses great alarm at the "terrible state of affairs" à propos religion and the Church. Some say, he writes, that the attacks on religion by modern philosophers will pass as other things à la mode; and, indeed, the attacks on religion seem to have fallen off somewhat from what they were a few years ago. And yet, what import if these empoisonneurs have disappeared or lost some of their esteem if the poison circulate still in the veins of the multitudes, arousing impure and perverse passions and seething in their minds.[1] Indifference, moreover, has gained those who are not out and out opposed to religion. Amongst the clergy, it seems that the prevalent disposition is either to sympathize with the new ideas or to remain quiet. There thus exists within the clergy an aura of false security. "Who amongst the ministers of religion is as scared as he should be by the

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1. Requête des fidèles à nosseigneurs les évêques de l'assemblée générale de clergé de France [S.l.n.d. (May-June 1788). Pp. 108], p. 5. Attributed to Père Lambert by Barbier.

awful crisis that faces the Church of France."[1] It is as if we were sleeping on the edge of a precipice. And it is for you, my lords spiritual, to warn the king that it is to his great interest to protect and to preserve religion, to remind him that once religion is lost, all will collapse in his kingdom, including his own administration. For once this brake is released, once this most powerful force for containing the multitudes and repressing passions is swept away, society will find broken that unique bond for subordinating particular interests to the general interest.[2]

Nor will the king himself escape the effects. For the people will no longer see in their prince the image of God, a fecund majesty; rather, they will see a master who is hard and disagreeable, one who has risen through ruse or violence and whom force can overthrow; and they will no longer obey him through the directions of their consciences or through their love.[3]

It is said that for a long time there has been no fixed principle for the conduct of Church affairs, that too many changes in the Feuille des Bénéfices have taken place, and that control is now in the hands of a small group of sly and enter-

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1. Ibid., pp. 14-15. 2. Ibid., pp. 27-28.

3. Ibid.

prising prelates who direct the affairs of the Church according to their interest or caprice. It is further said that these men sow divisions so as to eliminate strong opposition and that they dominate in the Assemblies of the Clergy. More important, one hears that the members of this small group of men who dominate and govern the Church are absolutely indifferent to religion. This is what is said. And we must admit that in all that has taken place before our eyes in the last few years, we find nothing with which to combat such an opinion.[1]

Let the Church liberate itself from the clutches of these ambitious and versatile men. They are men of esprit, of talent, and above all of a great intelligence in affairs of the world. But if they employ this intelligence and these talents merely to increase their own fortunes or to win a place in society, then we can but conclude that they are harming religion and the Church.[2]

Other bishops, too, bring discredit upon the Church through non-residence in their dioceses. Paris has become the habitual residence of the greatest number of bishops. Their special tastes demand more liberty, and it is in the capital that they hope to find it. They think that here they can hide

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1. Ibid., p. 104. 2. Ibid., p. 105.

themselves in the crowd and hence escape public censure.[1]

Although the Requête des fidèles did not specifically name Brienne or other of the political bishops, the intent was nevertheless to question the integrity of the motives of these prelates as part of a general examination of the ills of the Gallican clergy and the prescription of remedies for them.

Brienne, in the course of his ministry after the dissolution of the first Notables, had encountered a continually widening circle of opposition. Adhering to the policies of Calonne to increase revenue, he met that same opposition which had overthrown his predecessor: the refractory privileged classes. When the Archbishop presented his edict for additional taxes to the Parlement of Paris, the magistrates rejected it with contumely and called for the meeting of the States-General. Registered by lit de justice, the edict was nullified soon after by these same magistrates, who were then exiled to Troyes in August 1787. Returned in November of that year on the promise that the edict would be withdrawn and that the States-General would be summoned, the Parlement refused to grant the loans requested and continued to harass the government till its suspension in May

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1. Ibid., p. 60.

1788.[1]

The continued opposition of the Parlement of Paris to the exercise of royal authority provoked Louis XVI to approve the projects presented to him by Lamoignon, Keeper of the Seals, to reform the judiciary. Thus a cour plénière, composed of high functionaries, was instituted to register all royal edicts. The parlements were deprived of jurisdiction in a great many of the civil and criminal cases they had previously heard. These cases were now to be judged by 47 special courts that were created. Moreover, the special tribunals already existing for tax cases, finances, etc. were abolished. The resistance of the nobility of the robe to these reforms was felt throughout the kingdom. In Béarn, Brittany, and Dauphiné revolts broke out against the king's officers; and May and June of 1788 saw the intervention of royal troops in Grenoble and in parts of Brittany.

The Church, in its turn, resisted infringement of its privileges and supported the magistrates in their struggle with Brienne's ministry. An extraordinary Assembly of the Clergy convoked by Brienne through a letter of Louis XVI of 31 May 1787 to meet on 27 August 1787 was subsequently postponed till 5 May

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1. Alfred Cobban, A History of Modern France: Old Régime and Revolution, 1715-1799 (London, 1957), pp. 127-128; Albert Mathiez, La Révolution française; Tome I : La chute de la royauté, 1787-1792 (Paris, 1946), pp. 27-30.

1788, a circumstance that probably rendered the deputies even less tractable in their demands. In the king's second letter postponing the Assembly some five days before its scheduled meeting, it was announced that the number of deputies to attend was to be doubled; provision was thus made for the election of an additional two deputies from each provincial assembly, one from the lower clergy and one from the higher.[1] The ostensible reason for the delay and the doubling of deputies was to give the Assembly a wider representation amongst the clergy and thus permit the clergy to negotiate with authority equal to that of a regular Assembly, the deputations of which included four ecclesiastics from each provincial assembly. The king had convoked the clergy specifically "to treat the means to provide the help that we await from their zeal; for the re-establishment of our finances requires us to turn to them as we do to our other subjects."[2]

The May Assembly of the Clergy reacted to the suspension of the Parlement of Paris with Remontrances complaining of the

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1. Procès-verbal de l'assemblée générale extraordinaire du clergé de France, tenue à Paris, au covent des Grands Augustins en l'année 1788. MSS. in Folio of 677 Pp. in Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève of Paris, MSS. No. 199 (Old Catalogue No. C2946), p. 1.

2. Ibid., p. 3.

removal of this legal body and requesting the summoning of the States-General. They further protested against the establishment of the cour plénière and declared that the nation would lack confidence in this tribunal because of its evident complaisant character.[1] The king replied to the Remontrances of the clergy concerning the cour plénière with a defense of his actions and stated that he wished "no particular body to usurp his rights or its [the Nation's] but that he merely desired to confer à nouveau upon the Nation the exercise of those rights that belong to it. . . ."[2] To counter Louis' rebuttal, the Assembly drew up a Mémoire au roi in which the clerical delegates stated their conviction that "no tax could be levied without the consent of the States-General; that no court can represent the nation, for it can be represented only by the States-General."[3]

It was, however, in their Remontrances to the king concerning the immunity of their wealth that the clergy gave vent to

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1. Remontrances du clergé de France assemblé à Paris, sur les edits enregistrés au lit de justice le 8 Mai de la même année, MSS. No. 199, Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève, pp. 87ff.

2. Réponse du roi aux Remontrances de l'assemblée sur les édits enregistrés au lit de justice du 8 mai 1788, p. 235; cf. also in the Archives Nationales, G8 706, p. 357, the Réponse du roi aux Remontrances du clergé, le 6 juillet 1788.

3. Mémoire au roi, Ibid., p. 236.

the strongest expression of their indignation. "The clergy, Sire, is greatly pained to see its immunities perpetually menaced --witness the subvention territoriale. . . which would submit the clergy and its territorial possessions to the same taxes as those of all other citizens."[1] The properties of the Church are pledged and consecrated to God. They are destined to the maintenance of the decency of the divine cult, to the subsistence of ministers of the religion, and to the care of the poor. Our immunities are founded upon certain titles and usages in the kingdom, and we have traditionally enjoyed liberty in our administration. Attacks against these liberties force us to protest and to request protection from the throne against them.[2] The rights, liberties, and immunities of the clergy rest on unshakeable foundations and were in existence even before the monarchy. "May it please God to conserve forever for France that ancient constitution which weighs the force of earlier intents and finds them superior to the revolutions of time. . . ."[3]

The reply of Louis XVI to the clergy's Remontrances sur les immunités des biens ecclésiastiques reassured the clerics

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1. Remontrances du clergé de France assemblé à Paris en 1788 sur les immunités des biens ecclésiastiques et des hôpitaux, p. 77.

2. Ibid., p. 67. 3. Ibid., p. 72.

that they would not be required to pay the vingtième. Moreover, declared the monarch, the granting by the clergy of the exceptional don gratuit (although less than a fourth of the requested amount) "assured that the liberty of the clergy's gift and of it s administration had not suffered nor should not suffer any invasion."[1]

Comforting as the king's words were, the men of the Assembly nevertheless felt compelled to define further their position both on fiscal matters within the Church and on ecclesiastical property. That the latter subject was becoming an urgent one is revealed in statements like the following: "The property of the religious houses," they declared adamantly, "belong to the Church. When these properties become vacant, it is for the bishops to dispose of them following canon rules and in the manner they judge to be the most compatible with the greatest utility for the Church and for the State."[2]

With the thoughts foremost in their minds formulated almost exclusively in terms of the special interests of the higher clergy and the corporations within the hierarchy, the deputies

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1. Réponse du roi aux Remontrances d l'assemblée sur les immunités du clergé, Ibid., p. 177.

2. Procès-verbal, p. 284.

voiced bitter complaints over the burdens involved in the implementation of the king's edict of 1786 that increased the portion congrue. The increase, it appeared, had not been carried out equally in all parts of the kingdom. In Brittany, Guyenne, and Navarre, for example, the edict had not even been registered by the parlements.[1] Moreover, in some areas such as Toulouse the terms of the law had been modified. And in Provence, although the edict had been registered without modification, the execution thereof had resulted in the ruin of several seminaries and cathedral chapters. Though some general indemnities had been granted in this southern region, not a single évêché of the important metropolitan Aix had yet been indemnified for the heavy losses suffered there. To remedy the plight of chapters like those of Aix the deputies proposed that certain benefices be united to those of the évêchés which had been rendered insolvent by the augmentation of the portion.[2]

Two attempts to tap the wealth had thus broken upon the opposition of the upper clergy. And the involvement of the bishops in political affairs resulted in acrid criticisms against them. The voice of the Assembly of the Clergy was nevertheless

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1. Ibid., p. 289.

2. Ibid., pp. 291-294.

that of the higher clergy, and it was one of protest against the infringements by Brienne's ministry upon the traditional rights and privileges of the nobility and the clergy. Nor could we expect it to be otherwise given the composition of the Assembly. The roster of delegates shows that--as was the custom in such clerical assemblies--the delegates representing the lower clergy were chosen not from the rural or even from the urban curés and vicaires, but from the assistants to the bishops, the vicars-general, and the canons and abbots of the hierarchy, men whom the curés felt did not represent them. Hence there was little opposition to Archbishop Dillon and his colleagues, and they stood firmly opposed to any concessions of equality of taxation. Nor was there any recognition of the urgent pleas made for reform within the hierarchy. The Church in 1788 would not reform itself nor admit officially the need for serious reforms. And with more than a touch of reaction, the clergy in its assembly went further to denounce the government's feeble edict of 1786 because of the unequal fashion in which this legislation had been implemented throughout the kingdom and for the hardship that it wrought amongst the vested interests of certain clerical bodies.

As of May, 1788 the difficult position of the lower clergy was thus unchanged, and they were still subject to the same tensions and multiple loyalties as in previous years. The

prelates would not yield on the confiscation of church property, its submission to taxation, and the redistribution of the tithe. As members of the clergy, the priests might side with the bishops against the reformers in opposing total confiscation of the property of the Church, but, as dissatisfied clerics and as citizens, side with the reformers against the bishops in demanding redistribution of the tithe, in accepting royal taxation, and in denouncing "political" bishops. The denunciation of the maneuvering crew of prelates was a new note in the developing controversy.

Chapter III

FROM THE ASSEMBLY OF THE CLERGY TO THE CONVOCATION OF THE STATES-GENERAL MAY, 1788-AUGUST 8, 1788

By July 1788 Brienne found himself faced with the opposition of the two privileged orders and with an increasing pressure to convoke the States-General. Yet the Archbishop, by his own statement, was no advocate of the States as a panacea for France's ills. His policy had been to stall and resist demands for its convocation. In a letter written after he left the ministry to an archbishop colleague, he summed up his ideas on the subject:

> I have never been a partisan of the States-General. This meeting will bring about an epoch of discussion between the three orders and of trouble without remedy. . . . I have often said to the king: Do not appear willing to go too far toward convoking your subjects, rather retard the convocation as much as possible, your authority can but suffer by it.[1]

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1. Guillaume-Honoré Rocques de Montgaillard, Histoire de France (Paris, 1837), I, 426, cited by Jean Wallon, Le clergé de 89 (Paris, 1876), p. 159.

However, Brienne was unwilling to make sacrifices to individual groups, and consequently he refused the proposals of the Count of Artois and the friends of the magistrates to recall the Parlement of Paris after it had been dissolved once and for all.

> My own disposition is mild and conciliatory, but. . . I was deaf to every proposal that required unreasonable sacrifices; moreover, my opinion was. . . that sacrifices should be made to the nation at large and not to particular corporations, which I always considered as the enemies of the nation. . . I then. . . said to myself: 'I must come to a conclusion and no longer oppose the convocation of the States-General. Probably its being announced will calm the general anxiety . . . .'[1]

On July 5, 1788, he issued a decree inviting scholars, officials, writers, and archivists to search the records of previous States-General for the procedures and regulations previously employed. On August 8 the King, on Brienne's advice, then convoked the States-General for a meeting the following May.

During these summer months from the Assembly of the Clergy in May, 1788 until the Convocation of the States on August 8, pamphlets concerning the lower clergy were for the most part scanty in number and slight in content. A few are mentioned here, simply to communicate a sense of their evanescence.

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1. John Lewis Soulavie, Historical and Political Memoirs of the Reign of Lewis XVI, from His Marriage to His Death; translated from the French (London, 1802), VI, 231-232.

Indeed, to judge by the small number of pamphlets published prior to and immediately after the Assembly of the Clergy, the interest of the public was but slight in the ponderous proceedings of the French Catholic Church assembled. This meeting was, after all, a special one, convoked by Loménie de Brienne to obtain the appropriation of an extraordinary <u>don gratuit</u> to forestall the government's impending bankruptcy. And given the record of inaction of regular assemblies of the clergy in the past, little more than an act of generosity in a time of great need was apparently expected by most parties from the ecclesiastics.

And yet, if meager results were anticipated from the Assembly, it was none the less true that the body did possess full powers to conduct Church business by virtue of the terms of the convocation, and at least one writer, doubtless a clergyman, prompted by a bishop whose name is not revealed, was moved to suggest in a pamphlet that a few minor reforms were in order. Now, in general, it was the charges of decadence, corruption, and uselessness leveled against their order that stung sincere clerical writers the sharpest perhaps because most of those who took up their pens to discuss the affairs of the Church had to admit that a certain degree of decadence and declining discipline did exist. The author of this tract, addressed to the unnamed pre-

late at the Assembly, was no exception to this observation. In his essay, entitled Mémoire adressé à un prélat du clergé de France, membre de l'Assemblée générale de 1788, par un ami de l'ordre public,[1] he opens with the searching query: "Where does the decadence originate?" Some persons, he writes, attribute the decay in clerical integrity to the modern successors of Cardinal Fleury in the post of Ministre de la Feuille des Bénéfices. The real evil, however, lies deeper in the roots of the present system of appointments, and it stems in part from the elimination in most parts of the kingdom of the ancient system of elections to benefices and its replacement by the practice of arbitrary nominations. Under the former system, an ecclesiastic who wished advancement knew that promotion depended on the vote of his colleagues and, while this did not always result in the reward of virtue, it was a possible safeguard against the advancement of infamy. What we now need, the author declares, is a re-organization of the system of benefices along lines that resemble the military--with promotion possible only to those who have served a sufficient time in the lower ranks. It is a scandal to witness young men scarcely out of seminary being created grands-

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1. Mémoire adressé à un prélat du clergé de France, membre de l'Assemblée générale de 1788, par un ami de l'ordre public (False title: Mémoire sur le clergé séculier et régulier) [Londres, 1788. Pp. 144].

vicaires; nobles in the armed services are not promoted in such a facile manner but must first serve in the lower grades.[1] Before a priest is to be made grand-vicaire, he should be required to hold for a specified period a position either as curé in a town or as canon in a cathedral chapter.

The prelates of France gathered in the Assembly should, furthermore, consider another fundamental abuse within the Church. This is the institution of benefices held en commende, the focus of much criticism leveled against the clergy. If absentee benefices were abolished, suggests the author, the regular clergy in particular would reap enormous benefits in prosperity and prestige. For if the regular clergy could govern their own affairs and directly manage their properties, they could doubtless restore the condition of their finances and at the same time renew their vitality and integrity. The bishops, too, would benefit for they would have the nomination of the abbots and could expect to receive the pensions from the abbeys that are now being paid to absentee abbots.[2]

In general, the mild and conciliatory tone struck by the author of this Mémoire is typical of the one that prevailed at the time. Since little or no action was expected from the As-

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1. Ibid., pp. 7-14, passim. 2. Ibid.

sembly of the Clergy, those few ecclesiastics who did express themselves in print prior to the meeting and just after it were content gently to nudge the bishops assembled and to whisper in obsequious phrasing the least offensive and widest-circulated suggestions of clerical reformers like Henri Reymond.

In retrospect, the 8 July decree of the government requesting information on past meetings of the States-General produced no reaction amongst clerical writers to compare with the flood of pamphlets that it provoked amongst the Third Estate. Nor did even the unequivocable stand adopted by the Assembly of the Clergy in its Remontrances to the king provoke a violent reaction amongst the clerics---if we are to judge by the mere trickle of pamphlets published on this subject in the period to August 1788. Available in pamphlet form, excerpts from the Remontrances[1] appear to have drawn more attention outside the clergy than within.

From Provence, however, was heard the weakly plaintive voice of one ecclesiastic raised to protest in a brochure addressed to the Bishop of Blois, Auzières de Thémines, the absence

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1. See, for example, Remontrances du clergé, par M. l'Archévêque de Narbonne, du 22 mai 1788 [S.l., 1788. Pp. 3]; Arrêt du conseil d'état du Roi, condernant les droits, franchises et immunités du clergé; extrait des registres du Conseil d'Etat du 5 juillet 1788 [S.l.n.d. Pp. 7].

in the Remontrances of any mention of the paramount importance of religion as man's salvation in these troubled times. And although the author praises the bishop and his colleagues for requesting the re-establishment of the tribunals and the removal of the ban upon the magistrates, he nevertheless raises again certain doubts of the true piety of any bishop who so underplays the power of religion in times like these. "Can it be," he queries "that these pontiffs themselves have thought it possible to deal with problems of our time without any consideration of religion, of its influence, or of the powerful support that it provides in a moment of crisis when it alone can restore order and maintain public welfare?"[1]

If clerical writers like the above could doubt the piety of these prelates, certain lay pamphleteers would go much further and condemn the delegates of the Assembly for "meddling in affairs that were no concern of theirs," a leitmotif that was increasingly employed in popular laments late in 1788 and early in 1789. Such a critical commentator was the author of the satirical Arrêté du chapître général des Capucins, tenu extraordinarement en juin 1788. Assembled to hear the reading of the

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1. Lettre d'un ecclésiastique de Province à M. l'Evêque de Blois [Joseph de Lauzières de Thémines], au sujet des "Représentations" adressées au Roi par le clergé assemblé en 1788 [S.l.n.d. Pp. 48], p. 4.

Remontrances by the Procurer-General of their order, the counterfeit Capuchins express in this pamphlet their belief that men of the altar possess no right to "indoctrinate kings on political matters, or to preach about *lettres de cachet*, taxes, or the tribunals of the land."[1] The mission of a priest is to administer the sacraments, distribute charity, and teach the sacred doctrines--not to resist the authority of the king.

That this pamphlet is doubtless the work of the pen of a man of the third estate is made evident as, turning from ecclesiastical affairs, the satirical vehicle is transformed gradually into a platform from which to expound views on the limitation of aristocratic power. "A beautiful woman decides our most important affairs," writes this unhappy opponent of Marie Antoinette, "from public credit to the fortune and lives of all citizens."[2] Let us unite to end such scandals! With equal vigor the Capuchins condemn the support lent by the clerical Assembly to the beleaguered *Parlements*, and declare that it is these courts which are the real enemies of reform in France and that it is their cries of tyranny which have raised the people against the king--and all so that they might reign alone and undisputed.

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1. *Arrêté du chapître général des Capucins, tenu extraordinairement en juin 1788* [S.l.n.d. Pp. 14], pp. 3-4.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

Furthermore, "Of all the corps of the nation which should never protest the reform of the tribunals, the clergy should be counted the first because their empire is not of this world."[1] In a final action, the monks choose a deputation to be sent to ask of the government that the bishops, the instigators of these noxious protests, be solemnly condemned to reside in their dioceses and to pay taxes like all other citizens.

More penetrating and more carefully reasoned than the spurious statement of the frivolous monks is a work written in July or August of 1788 by another layman in reaction to the clergy's Remontrances and entitled Observations sur les Remontrances du clergé du 15 juin 1788. This legalistic pamphlet agrees initially with one element in the clergy's protest, viz. the position taken by the clerical assembly that any new taxes must be consented to by the Nation. Setting forth a limited view of the monarchy, the lay author decides, however, that the clergy are wrong in their assumption that the king alone is master and that he can modify laws on his own initiative, or even after consultation with his ministers. "The king himself is rarely a man of great instruction," the writer declares bluntly "and, moreover, since it is he that chooses his ministers, he

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1. Ibid., p. 10.

can be no surer of their wisdom that he can of their probity."[1] The sovereign can change laws only after hearing the counsels of the courts, while the magistrates can agree to new laws only with the people's consent. By the terms of the Social Contract, the absolute volition of the Prince cannot be made law without a special clause in the Contract. With his arguments borrowed freely from both Rousseau and Montesquieu, the legally-minded pamphleteer concludes that the clergy were right in their defense of the exiled magistrates because the nation has conferred upon the courts its right to review laws, and the Prince must not abuse the power of the courts.

By and large then popular opinion as expressed in the pamphlets of the time supported the defense of the Parlements that the clergy made in their Remontrances to the king. On the other hand, the clergy's insistence upon the absolute immunity of their privileges from royal tampering found little public backing. That the clergy in their assembly feared for their privileges and their property has been clearly recorded on thick parchment in the great folio pages of the manuscript of their Remontrances. And with the king's restatement of their ancient immunity, the clergy seemed to have beaten back for the time

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1. Observations sur les Remontrances du clergé du 15 juin 1788 [S.l.n.d. Pp. 29], p. 9.

being the attempts by Brienne and his ministry to subject them to taxation. Yet the threats to their great wealth were by no means past. For although the publication of vitriolic censure had subsided somewhat, the combined efforts over the years of d'Holbach, Voltaire, Diderot, and others had burdened the clergy with a legacy of accusation that could not be easily dissipated.

However, during these summer months two pamphlets appeared that are worth serious consideration. The first was probably published in June 1788, on the heels of the departing clerical delegates. No doubt the dual product of the efforts of the lawyer Chas and of the Abbé Montignon, this pamphlet is a long and logically-argued defense of the clergy's interests, and it exhibits some of the most subtle and plausible reasonings of any work written in defense of the clergy prior to the States-General. Like the Remontrances, this essay, entitled Réflexions sur les immunités ecclésiastiques, reflects great apprehension over the continued immunity of the clergy's income from taxation; it displays, moreover, an anxiety that is equally intense over the fate of the great properties held by the Church.

Throughout this pamphlet runs the assumption, now implied now explicit, that deep-seated sentiments have been created amongst the French populace--and even amongst the great of the kingdom--to attack the clergy's time-worn immunities. And it is against the chief detractors of the clergy's status, the

philosophes, that the authors naturally aim their mightiest shafts, for these "factious and independent" writers and free thinkers seek to destroy the clergy and the established Church and to set up in their place a religion that flatters the passions and consecrates vice.

> These are tormented men who, either from ambition or cupidity, desire great uprisings and who then profit from such public revolutions to line their own pockets and to multiply their rapines and their depredation. These are supreme egoists who live only for their own personal interest and who, possessing neither country nor town nor tender feelings, view the evils of society with a guilty stoicism. These are men of good faith, but they are credulous and ignorant; they do not see that a transient good can produce both injustice and misfortune.[1]

These detractors of clerical immunities, write the authors of the Réflexions, depict the ecclesiastics as bad citizens lacking in patriotic zeal, as hardened subjects who do battle with the sovereign power by refusing to pay the State's debts. They attempt to arouse and maintain hate and public contempt for the clergy through the dark tableaux that they draw of a people crushed beneath the weight of taxes. And they contrast the piteous condition of the populace with that of the clergy, whom they portray as insulting the misery of the masses through a

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1. Réflexions sur les immunités ecclésiastiques considérées dans leur rapport avec les maximes du droit public et l'intérêt naturel; par M.C. . . . [Chas], avocat, et M. l'Abbé de M. . . [Montignon] [Paris, Maradan, 1788. Pp. 161]. Printed "Avec Permission du Roi", pp. 3-4.

dissipation of their riches to satisfy luxurious needs and coarse passions.[1] Nor do they stop here: the philosophe writers use the present misfortunes of the Gallican Church as a pretext to rob it of its venerable privileges. The morals of the clergy, the laxness of ecclesiastical discipline, the scandalous opulence of the benefice-holders, the inequality of fortune that results from the distribution of benefices--nothing escapes the bitter zeal of these men who decry the immunities of the clergy.

In this century we have seen royal attempts to impose taxation upon the clergy, but they have all failed. Historically, the clergy's immunities can be traced back to Constantine and Clovis; and Louis XIV, a noble prince much calumniated by modern philosophy as a zealous defender of the true religion and an irreconcilable enemy of error, confirmed them by declarations in 1646 and 1655 and again by letters patent of 1650. The French king, although he is the supreme and unique legislator with power to modify, interpret, abrogate, or annul civil laws, cannot change basic laws, for these come from the Constitution and form the basis of public rights. The clerical immunity from taxation is a part of the Constitution and only the nation assembled can change constitutional laws.

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1. Ibid., pp. 7-8.

Having effectively tied the king's hands with constitutional bonds on the subject of clerical taxation, the authors in a moment of concern for Church property duly unbind their monarch that he may receive the full responsibility for protecting the Church's domains. The king, in the view of the authors of the Réflexions, has the power (and thus the duty) to protect the property of all citizens in his special quality as defender of the State. And thus he has a right to guard and inspect the religious domain. In addition, the authors assert that the property of the Roman Church possesses the same characteristics and privileges as the Crown's own domains. Hence, in unfortunate times the king could even sell this property for it is consecrated both to a religious and to a patriotic use.[1] The clergy, however, could not alienate their own lands without the consent of the nation. On the other hand, the nation, without the clergy, could not dispose of the religious domain because these properties represent a public fund given to be perpetually maintained.[2] It is falsely believed, they wrote, that the clergy wish their property to be regarded as sacred only to render it independent of the sovereign and of the nation. Yet it is precisely because it is a sacred domain that it is a true national domain, one

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1. Ibid., pp. 87-88. 2. Ibid., p. 108.

assigned by the nation itself to a category apart and one which becomes a resource in times of public and private misfortune.[1]

To render odious the clergy's immunities, some malicious persons have given inexact, false, and absurd definitions of them. It is claimed, for example, that the clergy insist upon their immunities only to escape the State's levies. And yet it is in fact their obligation to consecrate the revenues of the religious domain to the needs of the State, to be spent on public expenses, that is the foundation and the reason for the immunity.[2] This privilege of immunity has not been accorded the clergy to relieve them of the charges of society; it has rather been transmitted to them so that the ecclesiastical wealth (biens), mortgaged without reserve, might be conserved and more completely diverted to aid the nation in its distress and its calamities. "The clergy is but the administrator and treasurer of the ecclesiastical wealth; the nation is the true proprietor."[3]

Continuing their ingenious arguments, the authors maintain that if the clergy's wealth were properly administered, there would be no profit to tax. In order to be taxed, there must be an available sum, a surplus after expenses, because the

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1. Ibid., p. 89.
2. Ibid., p. 88.
3. Ibid., p. 94.

tax cannot be laid on the necessary portion of the clerical income. It follows that if the revenues of the clergy be entirely absorbed by their expenses which, by their very nature, are so necessary--if, that is, there can never be a surplus after the proper employment of ecclesiastical revenues--then it will be discovered that there is no portion of the clergy's income to tax.[1] The wealth of the clergy represents the oblations of the faithful, the mercy of the pious; it is the heritage of the sanctuary, the patrimony of the poor and the rich; and it must be consecrated without reserve to its religious and patriotic use.[2]

As the line of the argument in this pamphlet is branched out, it tends to the fustian. The authors thus affirm that it is proven that the dons gratuits accorded by the clergy to the State are immense sums and that these are the equivalent of a perpetual tax. What is more, they maintain that the taxes paid by the clergy within their own estate are more considerable than those paid by other members of society.[3]

If there are admittedly abuses within the Church--and the existence of these abuses the authors will not contest--the solution does not lie in an extreme form of punishment because of

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1. Ibid., p. 95.
2. Ibid., pp. 95-96.
3. Ibid., p. 130.

their existence. And yet such a solution is proposed, for the enemies of the Church would strip the owner of the property to punish a bad administrator.[1]

And is this the time, they ask, to strike a blow at the clergy, to confiscate their lands or remove their privileges and thus lose for them the esteem of the populace? In this time of troubles, without religion and without the clergy there would exist but the rigors of law and the fear of punishment to brake the conduct of the citizen. Is this the moment to weaken the confidence of the people in a clergy that brings them to respect the holiness of holidays, the pomp of ceremonies, the majesty of the cult, the beauties of the sanctuary, in a clergy that teaches the masses that this mysterious chain that unites the earth with the sky must serve them as a guide to conduct them to immortality? "A society in which the citizens forget or scorn the precepts of religion cannot subsist: for this moral disorder must necessarily lead to a political revolution."[2]

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1. Ibid., p. 153.

2. Ibid., p. 159; pp. 157-158; See also the arguments for la morale and religion as the most powerful weapon for calming enflamed passion and assuring public felicity: "La morale, plus puissante que les loix, les soldats, les armées, et la politique affirment l'autorité royale, en conservant la liberté des citoyens. . . la religion, par ses espérances, ses consolations et ses menaces, frappe l'âme d'étonnement et de terreur; et ce ressort qui agit sur les consciences, est plus propre à apaiser les guerres ee les factions, que la crainte des tortures et des supplices." p. 120.

In the end, the authors of the Réflexions place their trust in the king to shield the clergy from injury. And it is upon the assumption of benevolent and enlightened absolutism that they set forth their basic tenets of the relationship between the people and the monarch. "The prince is always master," they write, "without the citizen's being a slave; for he can through his sovereign power order that anything be done, while the people can through their supplications and their remontrances obtain anything from him."[1] Let the king meditate on the power of religion to calm the populace at times when it is excited and makes undue demands; let him consider that religion in this respect is stronger than his armies or his soldiers. And if a tax on ecclesiastical properties is proposed, let him call deputies of the clergy and consult them for "it is for them to indicate the means. . . ."[2]

An answer soon appeared to the ingenious arguments expounded within the Réflexions for the continuation of ecclesiastical immunity and for the preservation of the property of the Church; this reply was entitled Lettre à M.D., par M.L.[3] Loosely

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1. Ibid., p. 125. 2. Ibid., p. 159.

3. Lettre à M.D., par M.L.; ou Examen d'un ouvrage intitulé: "Réflexions sur les immunités ecclésiastiques considerées dans leur rapport avec les maximes du droit public et l'intérêt national" [Paris, chez les marchands de nouveautés, 1788. Pp. 67].

reasoned and emotive in contrast to the cold and logical Réflexions, this pamphlet bears the imprint of a lay writer who possesses a mind of a legal bent. Proceeding methodically through the lengthy Réflexions, the author answers its major points. In reply to an early statement in the Réflexions that a small group of propagandists are responsible for the bad reputation of certain clergy, he declares: "it is not only the detractors, the men who write against ecclesiastical immunities, who are scandalised by the conduct of those clergy who possess the gros bénéfices of the Church, it is the whole public."[1]

With his arguments carefully set in the 'proper' historical context demanded of serious words on such weighty subjects, the author continues that it is certain, moreover, that for the more than twelve centuries during which the Church has scandously misused its property the people have not ceased to cry out against its immunities. The government itself during the reign of almost every monarch has attempted to no avail to subject the ecclesiastical property to the taxes paid on other properties in the kingdom; the resistance encountered each time, however, has forced the abandonment of the project. True, kings can grant special privileges, but the same king or another can revoke then --thus historical precedent has little weight. They have written

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1. Ibid., p. 4.

in the Réflexions that: "It is to history that we must turn to find the answer." But it would be much more appropriate, declares the author, to search for the origins and conservation of clerical privileges in natural law than in history, "history which is almost always servile and incredible and which is, for the most part, denuded of constitutional principles and of philosophy."[1]

With historical precedents safely brushed aside, the author takes from his thin purse of arguments the well-worn coin of Caesar's which he duly admonishes the clergy to render up. He writes that the clergy because of their spiritual powers consider themselves the equal of the monarch. Moreover, they exercise considerable authority and of a kind that extends far beyond the spiritual realm. The king, he reasons, does not say mass, nor preach, nor confess, nor dogmatize, nor meddle in the affairs of Heaven. So, why not allot to the clergy the management of consciences alone, thus depriving them of the management of property of the State's.[2]

After some floundering against the ramparts of abstruse ecclesiastical argument, the author of the Lettre à M.D. at last discovers the weak point of the clerical defense in the Reflex-

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1. Ibid., p. 6.
2. Ibid., p. 23.

ions and breaches it with a vigorous attack. He perceives that the authors of this pamphlet based their arguments upon a foundation admittedly false, viz. that the wealth of the Church is or will be employed uniquely as designated by the benefactors of the clergy over the centuries. Although inefficiency in the administration of the Church's properties is avowed by the authors of the Reflexions and their entire reasoning based upon the premise that reforms would be carried out and certain abuses eliminated, their essay contains little or no suggestion for the correction of a "bad" administration nor an idea of the agency that shall effect such a correction.

The property (biens) of the Church, the lay writer correctly emphasizes, comprises three components: the tithes, the conventual foundations, and the chaplaincies. The origin of the tithes, he reminds us in a standard argument now too familiar, lies in the general consent of the owners of the land to render a tenth part of their income in charity to assist the aged, widows, and orphans. As for the conventual foundations, they were originally intended to educate students and to receive travelers in need of hospitality. The chaplaincies, some of which were called priories, and other assistantships to the curés, were intended for persons whose duties would be to help maintain the parish churches, and a portion congrue was allotted the most

deserving holders of them. Any surplus from these benefices was to be distributed by their holders to the families of the parish poor. The endowments of the Church were intended for uses such as these; and if the wealth of the clergy is to continue to enjoy immunity from taxation, writes our author, it must be employed to fill its veritable purpose: "it is not a question of suppositions; one must hold to the facts if one wishes to know whether Church property is being employed for its designated purpose, because the immunities of this property were established and are maintained only on this condition."[1] It is not sufficient, he writes further, for the authors of the Réflexions to maintain silence, as they do, on this point.

Having located a weak spot, the writer probes still further as he points out with subtle skill that a distinction should be made between that portion of the wealth (biens) of the Church which actually serves as subsistence for the poor of the kingdom and that which has been designated to assist them but never arrives. The former, since it fills the purpose for which it was destined, should be free from taxation; the latter, because it is consumed by the gros bénéficiers and by monks who enjoy this abundance as the fruit of idleness, should be taxed for it

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1. Ibid., p. 43.

never reaches the poor. The situation to-day is simply that the aid does not usually attain the proper persons.[1]

Certain statements made by the authors of the Réflexions concerning the sovereign and his intended reforms in the Church seem exceedingly vague, he writes. What is clear, however, is that they believe that the king can sell the Church's property when bad times necessitate.[2] Now, Messieurs, you will have to admit that if in bad times the sovereign can sell the property of the Church, then in other times, when he needs money, he can certainly levy a tax on this property.

The proposition is set forth in the Réflexions that if the nation is consulted for the apportionment of taxes, then the clergy should also be consulted. True enough, but why should the clergy be consulted separately? Should not the clergy combine in a natural way with the nobility in any consultation? Before Christianity, the men of the cult were of the noble class and took their places with the nobility. Why do the men of the cult to-day wish to sit apart? In a natural arrangement there would be but two orders in society: nobility and commons. Since the singularity of the clergy is an innovation, why should not,

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1. Ibid., p. 47.

2. Ibid., p. 51. See Réflexions, op. cit., pp. 87-88 and see above pp. 91-92.

in like fashion, the magistracy form an order, or the military?[1]

In a more conciliatory mood, the lay writer concedes that it is commonly admitted that if the property of the Church were distributed or divided up more equitably, then those ecclesiastics who carry the burden of the ministry would be both better treated and better enabled to assist the poor of their parishes. Nor is it, he admits, a general belief that religion is an accomplice to the abuses within the Church.

If it is true, as the authors of the Réflexions maintain, that the clergy pay a truly considerable sum to the crown in the form of don gratuit, this is just, for they possess one-third of the property of France. The Church's wealth, moreover, comprises part of the public funds, and there exists no reason to distinguish between Church wealth (biens) and other public funds. To draw such fine distinctions between their wealth and public wealth, as the clergy do in writings like the Réflexions, is ludicrous; instead, they should occupy themselves with raising money for the payment of an indemnity to acquit the nation of the damages incurred during the twelve-odd centuries in which the wealth of the Church has not been employed in the manner designated.[2] Upon reflection, however, it appears certain that the burden of paying such an indemnity would fall in great part

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1. Ibid., p. 58.
2. Ibid., pp. 63-65.

upon the lay usufructuaries and not upon those responsible. And so, the author concludes, the king must take that action which he deems just while leaving intact the entire property of the Gallican Church.

A close analysis of the clerical Réflexions and the lay Lettre à M.D., written in reply, is of interest for a number of reasons. In the first place, the two works accurately reflect published sentiment expressing concern within and without the clergy over the Church's privileges and its great wealth. In the great preoccupation with defining the legal status of the Church's properties can be seen the anxiety of the clergy and the acute interest of the laity: the anxiety of the clergy that they might be stripped of their immunities and despoiled of their lands, and the interest of certain intelligent and literate laity in reforms within the Church to enable it both to bear its proper share of the tax burden and to use its wealth for the greater benefit of the people, "the true and ultimate proprietors." An indication of the nature of the climate of reform of the day is seen in the agreement of the author of the Lettre with those of the Réflexions that the revenues of the clergy should be spent in great part on public expenses for charity, hospitals, and the like; moreover, in principle, both would agree that at the present time the Church's wealth is not being properly administered to such an end.

Of significance, too, is the agreement of both works that the public is scandalized by the great inequality of fortune amongst the clergy and by the misconduct of some of the wealthiest of the benefice-holders, the gros bénéficiers. Both would agree, moreover, that these conditions stem in part from the "bad" administration of Church wealth and that reforms therein will contribute greatly to redressing the situation. The overall tone of conciliation of the author of the Lettre and his sympathetic understanding of the complexity of the problems of reform are exemplified by his remarks that an equitable distribution of Church wealth would be a first and major step in correcting the evils of the situation; and again they are seen in his concession whereby that portion of clerical funds which is at present employed as originally designated (for poor relief primarily) should be left free from taxation. The relative mildness of the reform ideas of the author is characteristic of writings on Church matters in the summer months to 8 August 1788.

There are thus published in this period no renewals of the demands of Diderot some decades earlier for the absolute confiscation and sale of Church lands. On the contrary, the author of the Lettre, for example, insists that the king must preserve the Church's property intact---although he questions the right of the clergy to administer their property alone and affirms the king's power to tax the income from their holdings.

The author's conviction that the clergy must pay some regular tax is a general one at this time as well as the notion that clerical wealth is distributed inequitably and that many of the abuses within the first estate stem from this.

The ideas set forth in the Réflexions regarding clerical immunities and property serve to illuminate the existence of a certain tension in the thinking of many clerics upon these matters. On the one hand, there is a continual emphasis in clerical writings on the usefulness of the clergy to society, on the practical rôle they play in the performance of good works and in the maintenance of control over the excesses of the masses. On the other hand, many clerical writers admit that certain evils within the administration of the clergy have weakened their ability to carry out their work and recognize that the question of abuses is intimately connected with the question of immunities and property, because the attacks upon the clergy for their corruption are coupled with threats to punish them by taking away their riches and privileges. For the enlightened and sincere cleric, the problem of the reform of the clergy and that of the embarrassing riches of the first estate continue to be linked together. The enlightened cleric continues to stand with the prelates in defence of clerical property, while siding with enlightened laity in the demand for clerical reform. The resulting tension in his own mind will be resolved only when the issues

are placed in the broader context of the general struggle between privileged and non-privileged classes of French society.

Chapter IV

DAUPHINÉ, ANGERS, AND THE SECOND ASSEMBLY OF NOTABLES, JUNE 7, 1788-JANUARY 24, 1789

As we have seen earlier,[1] the efforts of Loménie de Brienne and Lamoignon to remove parliamentary obstacles from ministerial projects met with stiffened opposition from the privileged classes in the French kingdom in the period immediately after the series of royal edicts of 8 May 1788 instituting a "plenary court" in replacement of the Parlements. Not only were disturbances provoked in the towns that served as seats for the provincial Parlements, in places such as Bordeaux, Toulouse, Dijon, Rennes, Pau, and Grenoble, but, in Paris, sitting in extraordinary assembly, Brienne's own estate, the clergy, had sorely disappointed him with its sharp Remontrances and its niggardly authorization of a don gratuit that was but a pittance in view of his needs and his requests. Attempting no doubt to

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1. See discussion above, Chapter II, pp. 81-88.

forestall a meeting of the requested States-General, Brienne in the period of May and June made some concessions, such as his promise to the discontented notables in Dauphiné to revive the ancient States of that province, which had not met since 1628. From Brienne's concession would stem actions that provided important precedents in that province as well as developments that affected clerical affairs throughout France.

The disturbances in Dauphiné were precipitated by protestations of the Parlement of Grenoble against the May decrees. As punishment, lettres de cachet were issued by the Ministry ordering the magistrates of Grenoble into exile. On 7 June, however, a popular uprising occurred to prevent the departure of the men of the Parlement; there was rioting and the throwing of tiles upon the royal troops from housetops, from whence the name, "la journée des tuiles." The magistrates eventually left the city as ordered, but, in the meantime, Jean-Joseph Mounier, a lawyer of Grenoble who held the post of Juge Royal en la Cour Commune de Grenoble, along with several other prominent citizens of the town, obtained the convocation for the 14 June of an illegal assembly composed of distinguished men of the nobility, clergy, and third estate. This assembly prepared a Délibération[1]

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1. Délibération de l'Hôtel de Ville de Grenoble [S.l., 14 juin 1788. p. 7].

for presentation to Louis XVI; in this document they worded a strong protest against the edicts of Brienne and Lamoignon and, following a text prepared by Mounier,[1] they asked the king to recall and re-instate the exiled judges, to permit the convocation of the ancient States of Dauphiné, with equal representation therein of the Third Estate and of the privileged classes, and, finally, they reiterated the general request for the calling of the States-General "to remedy the wrongs in the Nation."

Hardly a representative group from the notables of Dauphiné, the men of the Grenoble Assembly decided subsequently to hold a general meeting of representatives of the prominent persons of the municipalities of the entire region to win broader support for their ideas. The date set for the Assembly was 21 July 1789, the place was Vizille. Despite a fair amount of publicity given the coming meeting, the results of the appeal to the municipalities for delegates failed to bring out a broad representation, and only 194 parishes out of 1,212 had delegates at Vizille. A number of factors might account for the feeble response; yet, in sum, with the exception of Grenoble itself it seems that the notables of the region were less vitally concerned than Mounier and his agitating associates with affairs of State

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1. See the Introduction to Jean Egret's study, La Révolution des Notables (Paris, 1950), p. 12.

and with the role their own province should play in influencing them. Nevertheless, some 491 Notables from the three orders assembled at Vizille on the appointed day.[1] Mounier was appointed secretary of the Vizille assembly as he had been of that of Grenoble. Working with great skill to win the support both of the nobles present and of his own compatriots of the third, Mounier emphasized the necessity of sacrifices on all sides and attempted to lead the men of the assembly to project their situation beyond the confines of narrow provincialism into a national and patriotic context. Although some of the nobles balked and joined the Marquis de Viennois, who declared that the Dauphinois nobles risked becoming mere echos of their friends of the third,[2] the greater number of the delegates supported Mounier in his projects. It was thus decided to solicit from the king the restoration of the States of Dauphiné not only with equal representation for the third estate, but with the additional stipulation that none of the representatives should gain seats by ancient rights nor should any perogatives be accorded in the meetings by virtue of birth alone.

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1. The body comprised 50 ecclesiastics (canons and town cures), 165 nobles and 276 men of the Third Estate. Egret, op. cit., p. 17.

2. Ibid., p. 19.

Loménie de Brienne, carrying out his earlier promise, ordered the delegates at Vizille to choose members for a consultative assembly to meet at Romans the 10-28 September to draw up and submit to the king a proposed constitution for the province in preparation for the promised States. The Consultative Assembly met as scheduled and prepared a constitution that was accepted by the Ministry. Elections were then held in Dauphiné for the States, which subsequently convened from 1 December 1788 to 16 January 1789.

In the plan for a constitution drawn up at Romans, the representation of each of the three orders in the States of Dauphiné was fixed as follows: 144 delegates, of which 24 were from the clergy, 48 from the nobility, and 72 from the third estate. Moreover, it was decided by the men of the three orders at Romans that certain property requirements should be fixed both for those who would vote in elections for delegates and for those who would stand for office. Thus from the third estate, only those could vote who paid a property tax of an annual amount of 6 to 40 livres depending on the place of residence; from the nobility, only those who owned property were eligible. To be a candidate for office from either of the two orders, a man must possess property and pay a tax of at least 50 livres.[1]

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1. Recherches sur les causes qui ont empêché les Français de devenir libres, II, p. 250; cited in Jean Egret, La révolution des notables (Paris, 1950), p. 22.

Although agreement was reached amongst the delegates at Romans on the above qualifications, the general question of restrictions provoked the most acrid debates within the otherwise harmonious meeting. To avoid a serious division, each order was permitted to define the terms of its own composition. The men of the clergy thus excluded the curés à portion congrue from the deputation which they chose for the States of Dauphiné. Two curés only were chosen, and these held property from their benefices. The remainder of the clerical deputation comprised three prelates, three commanders of the order of Malta, twelve canons, two simple benefice-holders, and two representatives of the monastic communities.[1] Furthermore, it was decided that in the future within the order of the clergy the bureau diocésain would choose the delegates to the States of Dauphiné. Both Mounier and the liberal nobles at Romans seem to have supported the exclusion of congruiste curés by the clerics, just as they upheld the property-holding restrictions established by the third estate and the subsequent practical decision by the men of the commons to exclude rural farmers from the States - out of fear, it seems, that the latter might be too easily influenced by their neighbors of the clergy and nobility. Mounier's general position at the

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1. Egret, op. cit., p. 41.

time on the matter of qualifications and restrictions was consistent with the ideas which he had expressed earlier in a statement of May 1788. He declared then: "It has perhaps not yet been well proven that he who possesses no property and lives in a state of absolute indigence should have the vote; for it might be justly feared that he would be too easily corrupted in the exercise of it."[1] Later, after the restrictions had been decided upon, Mounier temporized. He expressed regrets that the exclusions had been voted by separate action of each of the three orders; he further opined that an "esprit de corps" appeared to have prevailed therein, and that these decisions did not represent the free voice of the citizenry.[2]

The restrictions placed upon the curés by the order of the clergy in the Assembly of the Three Orders at Romans were hotly contested by the illegal syndicate of the curés that had been formed at Grenoble. United as early as 1776 to obtain material goals, the curés of Grenoble had seen their syndicate condemned by a royal declaration of 9 March 1782, and further

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1. Réponse des députés de la province de Dauphiné aux Etats-Généraux au nouveau mémoire intitulé: Mémoire pour une partie du clergé et de la noblesse du Dauphiné [S.l.n.d. Pp. 48], pp. 37-38; cited in Egret, op. cit., p. 22.

2. Nouvelles observations sur les Etats-Généraux de France, p. 267.

meetings "without express authorization" forbidden.[1] Emerging from obscurity to protest the actions of the clergy in the Romans Assembly, the curés sent a deputation of two to read a protest to the meeting. In the Mémoire of complaint, the curés declared that by conferring upon the Bureau Diocésain of Dauphiné the right to choose delegates to the States of the province, the Assembly had deprived them of the fundamental right to elect freely their representatives, "a right which they should enjoy as did other citizens."[2] The curés requested the delegates of the three orders to proclaim that henceforth in assemblies of the province they would be represented only by deputies freely elected by them under the eyes of their superiors. The three orders, deliberating in common, subsequently yielded to their demands and issued a declaration to that effect.[3] Hence for the first time in the French kingdom, the lower clergy won the right to elect their own representatives to governmental meetings.

Soon after the September meeting of the three orders at Romans, there was published at Avignon an important writing en-

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1. Isambert, op. cit., Vol. XI, p. 206; see also the protest work Avis Fraternal à Messieurs du moyen et bas clergé de toutes les provinces [S.l.n.d. Pp. 16], pp. 2, 3, 4.

2. Mss, Archives Nationales, B. III 56, pp. 91-92.

3. Ibid.

titled, Mémoire pour les curés de France relativement à la convocation prochaine des États-Généraux. Signed by "a great number of curés of the provinces of Lyonnais, Forez, Languedoc, de l'Auvergne, et de la Provence," the work is a product of an association or syndicate of the lower clergy to protect the rights of curés "in the interest of the State." From the very first lines, the theme is apparent. The king's announced meeting of the States-General, declare the authors, was greeted with rejoicing by all classes of citizens in France. The celebration sprang from the intention of His Majesty's present government that all classes shall have true representatives, freely chosen by them--all classes, that is, except the curés. The authors recount the history of the curés of France as the story of the long and continual frustration, because of a lack of proper representation in Church assemblies, of their attempts to win the bread and salt of basic subsistence. Yet to-day, in announcing the States-General, that benevolent monarch, Louis, has stated his intention to reform all parts of the kingdom's administration that require it and to correct all abuses complained of by the weaker sections of each of the three orders. The curés take heart from their sovereign's word and expect therefore not only to be represented at Versailles but to be listened to, and from the conviction that they will be stems the optimism of the work and the moderation of the arguments set forth by its authors.

Certain considerations, however, cause the curés apprehension lest the evident wishes of the ministry regarding clerical representation fail to be expressed. They express fears that they shall not have in the States-General a proportional number of delegates taken from their "class" and freely chosen by them. The principal source of this apprehension is the present state of affairs wherein the weight of a habit of closed judgements, "commonly called custom," is likely to prevail over reform. During a period of about a century now, they write, the abbés, the canons, the priors—the bénéficiers décimateurs, that is—have possessed a nearly-exclusive right to represent the second order of the clergy. By consolidating their position with the government and by gaining the support of public opinion, these benefice-holders might well succeed in maintaining such an abusive position—a position which upon the slippery tongues of the bénéficiers becomes a sacrosanct "usage." Hence, above all, it is important for the curés to reach the public with their arguments to rectify the opinion that it is correct for them to be represented in the economic assemblies of the clergy by such men; further, it is essential to prove their legal and imprescriptible right to be represented by curés, and to show that they have been deprived of the exercise of this right by "the

most reprehensible of means and by illegal proceedings."[1] To accomplish these ends it will be of importance for the curés to investigate and to make known the singular interest that the clergé décimateurs have always had in excluding them from the periodic assemblies of the clergy.

"It is not the Church which assembles its chiefs in the interests of religion," the curé-authors declare; "it is the clergy which assembles the deputies of the first and second order to settle temporal affairs."[2] Thus all offers, all promises, all pecuniary conventions of an assembly wherein the second order of the clergy is not represented are null and void. With great care the curés develop their argument and emphasize properly enough that the General Assemblies of the Clergy are convened by the king principally to conduct economic transitions and, in particular, to permit the clergy to vote the don gratuit. Only occasionally, after having performed the essential object of their convocation, do the delegates discuss spiritual matters. Quite explicitly the writers state "It is as citizens that the ecclesiastics form the first order of the State; and it is in

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1. Mémoire pour les curés de France, relativement à la convocation prochaine des Etats-Généraux [Avignon, chex les librairies associés, 1788. Pp. 94], p. 6.

2. Ibid., p. 9.

this civil capacity that the king convokes them; they are assembled as deputies solely to obligate themselves to the State [prendre des engagements envers l'Etat dont ils sont membres] and to give advice on means whereby their obligations may be met."[1] The rights of the curés to attend the divers councils, synods, and general assemblies, although affirmed by the States-General of 1614 and by a royal Ordonnance of 1629, is no longer in force in France. In addition, diocesan assemblies are no longer called and, by this negative means, the curés are excluded from the provincial assemblies wherein the deputies to the General Assemblies are named. Complaints made by the lower clergy to the general assembly of the décimateurs concerning matters such as the absorption by the curés primitifs of the tithes from the congruiste curés, the insufficiency of the portion congrue paid by the former to the latter, and the scandal of such practices as the casuel--all these have been met with deaf ears and with stony silence.[2] The syndicates of the curés, formed to press their demands for representation, have floundered on the reefs of resistance of the ecclesiastical aristocracy, who, exercising all their influence, obtained from the king the decree

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1. Ibid., pp. 9-10 (the italics are mine.)

2. Ibid., pp. 17 ff.

of 9 March 1782 forbidding such associations.

In a strong statement of principle, the curés further proclaim that an entire corps cannot be legally obligated for its property, as has been done in the Assemblies of the Clergy, except by action of those who represent it in all of its parts. The systematic exclusion of the curés is thus an abuse of power and the government, had it been legally and properly informed of the facts in the matter, would have corrected such an abuse long ago. Not only is the present situation prejudicial to the interests of the curés, but it is harmful to their needy parishioners as well, for the latter depend upon the curés in so many diverse ways. The interests which the bénéficiers, the priors and canons, have in the assemblies are directly opposed to those of the parishes. Proof of this is found in the situation whereby the Assemblies of the Clergy, although recognizing the penury of the curés, have done nothing to aid the lower clergy; invariably the deputies request more time to investigate local conditions and to verify reports of the increases in the price of wheat, and subsequently they adjourn with nothing accomplished.[1]

As a result of such a state of affairs, the curés à portion congrue find themselves isolated in their order in so far

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1. Ibid., p. 25.

as temporal matters are concerned. Further, they fear nothing more than the prospect of having the same type representatives in the States-General as they have had in past years. Legally they must be represented in the States-General, and represented in proportion both to their numbers in the clergy and to the total taxes they pay. Moreover, justice will not be done unless they have perfect freedom in the choice of their representatives.[1]

At the end of the Mémoire, the curés attached a copy of the deliberation of Romans. For in their eyes, the province of Dauphiné merited to become the model of all the others, the center of the "civil union." And as a final reminder of their patriotism, they declared their intention not to be surpassed by any other class of citizens in their pecuniary sacrifices to meet the needs of the State.

The message of their confrères in Dauphiné was not lost upon a group of curés in the diocese of Angers led by the Abbé Chatizel de la Néronière, parish priest at Soulaines, near the provincial capital. In the province of Anjou, as in other key provinces, grievances of the curés had accumulated in the years just prior to the Revolution. Yet, although the grievances ten-

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1. Ibid., p. 90.

ded to correspond from one province to another, the revolt of the curés was long in developing. Only slowly would the curés in key cities unite and formulate a clear program of action. And the leadership provided by more active dioceses like Dauphiné served to inspire and stimulate them. In Anjou the Curé Chatizel was the articulate leader of the discontent of the parish clergy. Since about 1782, Chatizel had been quite active in the clerical affairs of Angers and had expressed certain basic Richerist doctrines in a work that he published in that year to demonstrate that the priesthood was of divine origin and enjoyed a status independent of the episcopate; his argument was the standard one, viz. that the parish priests were descendants of the 72 disciples who were chosen independently by Christ.[1] In 1784, Chatizel's discontent was brought to a head when he was over-assessed by the Diocesan Bureau of Angers for the purposes of taxation. A formidable opponent when aroused, the curé of Soulaines took the Bureau heavily to task in a pamphlet written in the form of a letter to the bishop of Angers. In this work he roundly condemned the Bureau for "the obscurity of its administration, the unrepresentative character of its recruitment, and

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1. His views were expressed in a work on the rights of bishops to issue dispensations for marriages. See Traité du pouvoir des évêques de France sur les empêchements de marriage [Avignon, 1782. Pp. 48], pp. 112, 114, 124 ff.

the inequality of its assessments." With respect to representation he noted that thirty canons of the Cathedral had two members on the Bureau, twenty canons of other collegiate churches had one member, while the hundreds of parish priests had but two representatives and these two delegates were nominated by the Bureau itself. Reiterating his Richerist arguments, Chatizel declared that in theological terms the situation within the Bureau was indefensible, for pastors should follow bishops in the hierarchy, instead of falling victim "to a multitude of man-made institutions," viz. the chapters and their canons. In this particular case, he argues, human reasoning accords with the divine, for by "common law" and by "the very nature of things", curés possess an imprescriptible right to elect their own representatives.[1]

The continued pressures exerted by Chatizel and some of his colleagues enabled them to obtain some minor reforms in the diocese of Angers, the most important of which was a provision for the curés to elect their own representatives to the Bureau. But the domination of clerical affairs by the canons in the diocese could not be broken so easily. Hence, in late November or

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1. Lettre de MM. les curés du diocèse d'Anjou à Monseigneur l'illustrissime et révérendissime évêque d'Angers [S.l., 1785.], passim; following the summary by John McManners in French Ecclesiastical Society under the Ancien Régime (Manchester, 1960), p. 201.

early December 1788, the group of curés, headed by Chatizel, issued a Projet d'un Mémoire attacking the canons and abbés who had usurped the rôle of representatives of the clergy in general. In ringing periods, the curés of Angers announced in the opening pages that at this time when the goodness of the king invites all Frenchmen to express their griefs and their complaints concerning the administration of the kingdom, "a class of citizens important to the State and to religion dares raise its voice to carry its wishes to the foot of the throne and to arouse the concern of the French monarch with justice and goodness in his kingdom."[1]

In the French nation, they write, the clergy holds the first rank, and since religion is a bulwark of the State and in-

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1. Projet d'un mémoire des curés du diocèse d'Angers, relativement à la convocation des Etats-Généraux [S.l.n.d Pp. 19], p. 1. The authorship is attributed to Chatizel by Antonin Proust, Archives de l'Ouest (Paris, n.d.) IV, 13 ("Liste des brochures publiées en Anjou à la veille de la convocation des Etats-Généraux"); Proust reprints this pamphlet in IV, pp. 21-28; copies are also available at the B.N. Lb 39 1029 (copy utilized) and at the Arch. Nat. B. a 13 liasse 9, pl. 2. The date classification made by Garrett, op. cit., p. 261, as between 27 December 1788 and 24 January 1789 appears too rigid, if not incorrect. There is no evidence that this work was written or published after the doubling of the third; on the contrary, internal evidence indicates that the pamphlet was written, if not published, either late in November or early in December 1788. For a similar statement during the same period in Provence, see the curé pamphlet, Conseils au clergé Provence [S.l., 28 décembre 1788. Pp. 27], pp. 7-20, passim.

deed the most unshakeable support of the monarchy, it is not astonishing that all citizens unite to accord it this honor. A principal factor determining this illustrious position of the clergy is certainly the salutary influence ministers of religion exert upon the populace in the realm of morals. Yet in the present state of religion, this influence is hardly ever exercised except by the class of curés. With an ironical turn, Chatizel declares, however, that no offense is, of course, intended for the bishops:

> We render homage to their zeal and their talents. . . . we speak here only of the exercise of the ministry in detail, the aspect which has the most influence on morals and public tranquility. The vast extent of the dioceses and the immense multitude of public affairs leave but little time to the bishops for the functions that once provided the glory and the consolation of the episcopacy. General visits and Mandemants to the faithful, the reading of which can never instill in hearts the flame that is lit by the presence and the spoken work of apostolic zeal--these are almost all that is left to the bishops by the present constitution of the Church of France in the way of direct contact with the faithful, with the flocks, that is, which have been confided to them.[1]

Having thus shown that the bishops are by their functions removed from immediate contact with the populace, the curés take care in this writing to establish that they themselves constitute the essential link between the Church and the faithful; and stressing a matter of importance to the French king, whose favor

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1. Ibid., pp. 2-3.

and support are especially solicited, the authors expound at length upon the utility of their governmental rôle as the essential link between the sovereign and his subjects. They write: "In the governmental order, the curés are equally ministers of the sovereign, ministers who, in an instant, carry his wishes unto the least-known regions of the kingdom."[1] And further:

> It is they who, without the apparatus of violence and force, stamp submission and dependence in all hearts; it is they who erect in the consciences of the people a throne to the sovereign; it is they who cause the wisdom of his councils to be admired--a wisdom sometimes obscured by the appearance of severity of means; it is they who teach the bearing of tax burdens with joy and make loved the hand which governs. . . . In bad times, when discord seeks to spread its impoisoned breath throughout the kingdom, it is the ministers of a God Who is Himself the author of royal sovereignty that makes heard in the depths of consciences the imperious voice of a religion which proscribes even the desire or the prospect of revolt; a religion which menaces the wrath of heaven upon those who resist the earthly powers. . . .[2]

Moreover, the charity distributed by the curés of the kingdom is a factor in the prevention of crimes.

Louis XVI has formally recognized on several occasions the utility of these pastors of the second order. Yet "it is these citizens [the curés], so useful to religion, so important to the State, these same citizens who have been forced for a

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1. Ibid., p. 5.
2. Ibid., pp. 5-6.

century and a half to grovel, to serve, and to submit to oppressions."[1] The regular clergy and the canons have conspired against the curés. They have taken wealth which by nature and the intentions of the people should go only as the price of sacred functions. The modest portion congrue they grudgingly accord the ministers of the altars is quite insufficient. For want of funds, the curés are often forced to strip the mass of much of the ceremonial. Alone and unattended, at the head of his flock assembled for the parish offices, the curé, the one indispensable, must eliminate singing and almost all the other ceremony which constitutes the majesty of the exterior cult so necessary to revive amongst the faithful the sentiments of respect and adoration due to its mysteries. Whereas elsewhere--and sometimes in the same church--the offices of the monks and canons, as deserted as they are foreign to the true needs of the parishioners, offer such a display of magnificence that one could well doubt if the religion of the parishes is the same as that of the chapters.[2]

Continuing in terms that reveal their deep-rooted hostility, the curés state further that the regular clergy and canons have made themselves the arbiters of the interests, the

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1. Ibid., p. 8. 2. Ibid., p. 11.

rights, and the fortunes of the rest of the bénéficiers. To them have been confided the distribution of the tithes and the administration of ecclesiastical finances. "They have formed diocesan assemblies in which their despotism has always constituted the supreme law."[1] At Angers, they have taken the title of General Assembly for their meetings. Though pastors without vocation and without authority, they usurp the ministry and raise altar against altar. They divide the flocks and spread confusion in the house of the Lord. Without dependency, without discipline, and sometimes without morals, they take a criminal pleasure in resisting all attempts to curb their power; through their outbursts and resistance they fill the parishes with desolation and the dioceses with scandal.

The curés possess no means to redress this situation. The law forbids them to concert together or to unite. True, it gives them the right to an appel comme d'abus, but for the most part it is inaccessible to their demands. Hence, it was with rejoicing that the curés greeted the announcement of the States-General; this consoling prospect revives their hope and presages the end of their oppression. Yet an appalling prospect cuts short their joyful anticipation: If the States are convoked,

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1. Ibid.

they ask, will the curés be excluded? Will the interests of the curés be confided to the hands of their enemies as in the past? The class of curés certainly have the right to appear in the States for they comprise the most numerous portion of the clergy. "We are in the Church of France that which the third estate is to-day in the Nation."[1] In the last States-General of 1614, however, a group of clergy sought to swallow up the curés, but the men of the third estate intervened and saved them from harsh measures. Significantly, the authors add, "The curés have not ceased to show their gratitude to these wise citizens so enlightened and uncorruptible. They know, moreover, that they can count upon the zeal of their successors."[2]

Chatizel and his colleagues at Angers add a corollary argument to their pleas to Louis XVI to restore the 'true' principles of ecclesiastical government and to permit them an adequate and freely-chosen representation in the States-General. They argue that they merit to be consulted by the French king at Versailles because of their work with the peasants of his kingdom to raise the level of agriculture. Through their endeavors, they have come to understand the problems of the peasant and can

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1. Projet d'un mémoire des curés du diocèse d'Angers, relativement à la convocation des Etats-Généraux [S.l.n.d. Pp. 19], p. 13.

represent his interests. There are regions in France, they write, where agriculture is in its infancy, regions where the infertility of the earth, the asperity of the mountains, and the aridity of the countryside escape all those who have not had the misfortune to be born amongst it. Science has not penetrated into these remote provinces. But the pastor, who lives amongst the peasants in the exercise of his holy ministry, teaches the inhabitants of these foresaken regions. The number is immense, they declare, of barren, sterile lands that owe their fertility and abundance solely to the care of an industrious pastor whose zeal had conquered ignorance and whose wise instruction had directed the travails of his parishioners.[1] For all their efforts, however, many curés and lowly vicaires are dependent upon the noxious casuel for a proper living. In the greater number of our provinces, they add, these pastors are required to beg annually from door to door the reward for this work. Exposed thus to derision, to menaces, to hardships, they are compensated according to the disposition of the uneducated and the insensitive.

What the curés truly desire, they conclude, is to have in the States-General "representatives of their class and of their choice" to re-establish the force of canonical rules so

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1. Ibid., pp. 15-16.

that in the end: "que tout enfin soit décidé par la loi, et que dans un gouvernment le plus sage de la terre, il n'y ait rien d'abandonné aux caprices, à l'arbitraire, aux erreurs des hommes."[1]

Circulated in the province by Chatizel and his associates to obtain signatures before sending it to Necker, the Projet de Mémoire was denounced as a "seditious writing" by the representative of the higher clergy at Angers, the Abbé de la Brosse, Syndic General of the diocese. In a note of protest written to the Keeper of the Seals, he stated: "This libelous work disregards not only the respect due to the bishops but that due the king's law as well." He added: "It attacks, at the same time, two respectable and numerous classes, the canons and the regular clergy; moreover it criticizes the composition of the general assembly of the clergy of the diocese, an assembly that has subsisted as it is to-day from time immemorial."[2] Finally, de la Brosse denounced the Abbé Chatizel, "who has done nothing but trouble the waters in the diocese since he came to take possession of the cure at Soulaines."

The efforts of the curés in Dauphiné and Angers to obtain representation in the clerical assemblies and in the States-

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1. Ibid., pp. 18-19.

2. Lettre de Monsieur l'Abbé de la Brosse à Monseigneur le Garde des Sceaux, 9 janvier 1789, reprinted in Antonin Proust, Archives de l'Ouest (Paris, n.d.), IV, 30-31.

General did not pass unnoticed amongst the clergy in other parts of the French kingdom and curé movements developed in subsequent months in the provinces of Brittany, Lorraine, and Berry. In the meantime, however, a second Assembly of the Notables had been convoked by Jacques Necker, Brienne's successor. The meeting opened at Versailles on November 6, 1788 and continued until December 12. Stimulated by an excited interest in the flaming issues of the day and by the government's reactions to them, Frenchmen turned increasingly to the writing of pamphlets. The frequency with which the pamphlets appeared is reflected in the remarks of contemporary observers. Thus the Paris correspondent of the Gazette de Leyde remarked that on November 14 the rate was from three to four a day;[1] by December 10, the Comte de Fersen, a Swedish observer in France, declared that approximately a dozen of the writings appeared daily, and he was puzzled as to how the French press could maintain such a volume of publication.[2]

The major topics of discussion were comprised within the tripartite program of the third estate for the coming States-General, viz. double representation for the third; deliberation

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1. Gazette de Leyde (1788), No. 94. For the period covered by this study, the publication is available in the United States at the Library of Congress and at Princeton University.

2. R.M. de Klinckowström, editor, Le comte de Fersen et la cour de France (Paris, 1878), XIV.

in common; and vote by head in the meetings. Concerning the clergy, we note that it is in this period that the series of truly vicious and trenchant attacks began upon the position of the first estate in the kingdom, with the stated object of many writers being to exclude the clergy altogether from the States-General. Some of the writings, such as the pamphlet Un mot à l'oreille du clergé, published in November or December 1788, are careful to distinguish between the higher and the lower clergy in their comments, with the former singled out generally for the most acrid remarks. "Of what is the clergy composed," asks the anonymous author of this critical work in his opening sentence, "of the bishops, curés, abbés, or only of the bishops?"[1] At one time it embraced all these, but now it seems that only the bishops constitute the clergy. For the bishops relegate to the third estate the curés, the little abbés, and the monks. Let the bishops beware, however, for in dividing the clergy, in separating themselves from the others, they are negating the distinction of the ecclesiastical order; they are destroying the idea that the clerical order is one. Hence they themselves are formally deciding that there exists veritably but two orders: the nobility and the third estate. It could thus be argued that

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1. Un mot à l'oreille du clergé [S.l.n.d. Pp. 8], p. 1.

the clergy has no right either to exist as a separate order in the State or to sit in the States-General as such. The authors conclude then that the bishops, by their abuse of and discrimination against the good and respectable curés, have given the lie to the fiction that the first estate exists as an independent historical entity.

The higher clergy, moreover, have no right to sit in the States-General because they are not the owners of biens fonciers as required of all delegates. As an additional circumstance, the scandalous use the bishops make of the usufruct from Church property goes against the wishes of the donors, who intended the money to be used to aid the poor. Men such as the bishops cannot be trusted as representatives of their order.

Another work by a lay writer who displays sentiments which favor the curés and condemn the prelates is the pamphlet entitled La première au grands, ou suite du fanal, written probably in December 1788 but only published in January 1789. A somewhat banal attack upon the nobility and the higher clergy. this work attempts primarily to set forth the essential reasons for the doubling of the third. It is of interest as an example of a writing of the time which expresses sympathy for the curés but voices a general opinion common to many writers of the day that the clergy should not meddle in political affairs since

their kingdom is not of this world.[1] The author, a relatively learned fellow, sums up his ideas as follows: "Hume felicitates the English nation that the English clergy had lost its high esteem and influence. Soon, no doubt, the orators of the third shall felicitate the French nation that the Gallican clergy have lost not their high esteem, for that is their due, but the influence that they should not have."[2]

Ever since the publication of Montesquieu's Lettres persanes in 1721, satire and social criticism had often been intermingled in France, and one variation of this satiric approach often used in 1788-89 was the fictitious dialogue between personages of a class or type to be satirized. Such a work was the Conversation entre Monseigneur A et Monseigneur B, which appeared during the meeting of the Second Notables. The author, in his prefatory Avis, signalizes that this conversation is not to be taken as representative of all bishops; the reader is thus

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1. For examples of other works prior to 24 January 1789 which express similar sentiments see: Dialogue entre un curé, un chanoine de cathédrale, son curé primitif, et un philosophe [S.l.n.d. Pp. 15]; La France renaissante ou conduite admirable des princes de l'Eglise; ils convertissent les nobles et les richards inhumains [De l'Impr. de Ballard, rue des Mathurins, et se vend rue de la Parcheminerie, no 28, s.d. Pp. 7]; Le triomphe de l'aristocratie, ou preuves des droits du clergé et de la noblesse [S.l.n.d. Pp. 30]; Saint-Jean bouche d'or [S.l., 1789. Pp. 89].

2. La première aux grands, ou suite du fanal [S.l., 1789. Pp. 29], p. 3.

to assume that he portrays in this work representatives of a small but significant group of prelates and, in particular, those called to the notables. Excerpts from the dialogue convey the essence of the author's message and illustrate the satirical vehicle employed:

Bishop A: "it is certainly true that we are faced to-day with a revolution that threatens to wipe away the old and establish a new order of things. The more that I reflect upon this, the less I see a way to escape."

Bishop B: "Yes, we can only hope that through a wise and prudent course we can this time again pull through."

Bishop A: "And what should our course be?"

Bishop B: "One must learn how to bend with the breeze of circumstance, to appear to agree with those who attack one, to discuss with infinite moderation matters concerning oneself and one's position. The use of force and great resistance are useless and, moreover, could prove fatal."

Bishop A: "Alas! We no longer live in that happy time when we could order, under pain of excommunication, what we wished done. . . ."

Bishop B: "Indeed, it is no longer as bishops that we can defend ourselves."

Bishop A: Have you heard the latest? They wish to take our wealth, that is, not take it exactly, but use it for other purposes. For example, they will pay the lower clergy more, those upon whom, they say, falls all the burden of work."

Bishop B: "<u>All</u> the burden of work! Why is no account taken of our <u>Mandements</u> to the faithful? I admit, of course, that there has been a great deal of extravagance seen in our ranks. And it is difficult to deny that with the exception of a small number

> of us--those, that is, who exhibit personal merit through their wisdom and their conduct--we have generally lacked discretion in the use of our wealth. Moreover, it is true that we practiced a bit too little of that humility and poverty that we preach to others. But still. . . ."
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> Bishop A: "Yes, it seems apparent that we have not believed a word of what we preached in this respect."[1]

The real danger to the clergy, according to an inserted comment by the editor of the Conversation, arises from the threat to their wealth. In the opinion of many people, the clergy are but the usufructuaries of the Church property; the real owner is the nation. Since the nation is the ultimate owner, moreover, it can call for an accounting of the use made of the funds at a meeting of the States-General, and, more important, the nation can dispose of the property as it wishes.[2] Resuming the course of the conversation, Bishop B proposes an alliance with the nobility because both have property to defend. Bishop A replies in the negative arguing that once the time of troubles is past, the nobility may well turn its thoughts to what it considers the best interests of king and nation and subsequently seize the clerical property to support the nation. Instead of an alliance,

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1. Conversation entre le révérend père en Dieu Monseigneur A, et le révérend père en Dieu, Monseigneur B, par la miséricorde de Dieu et la grâce du Saint-Siège Apostolique, Evêque de. . . et de. . . en France [S.l.n.d. Pp. 31], passim.

2. Ibid., p. 27.

he offers a substitute plan to cause the States-General to fail to reform the clergy. A's plan would bring into play all the wiles and resources of years of secret intrigue. In its outline, his plan is as follows: While appearing to consent with infinite moderation to all that is asked of us, we shall raise objections to all projects having no direct relation with our own interests, thus avoiding suspicion of personal interest. We shall thus be thought to be uniquely occupied with the well-being of our country. But then we commence to sow discord. We play upon personal interests, vanity, and blind cupidity. We show the rich that they risk the loss of their property. We demonstrate the disadvantages of reform to particular parties. It will be said that all the projects of reform are impossible to execute. We shall protest in public our good faith in them. Eventually, all the projects shall fail because no understanding will be reached. We shall be saved, and we shall escape with no harm done to our intrenched position. Many people will be duped.[1]

"War against the privileged and against privileges--that is my motto," wrote Mirabeau in August 1788;[2] and this war raged on in the pamphlet press during the meeting of the second Notables,

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1. Ibid., pp. 12-13.

2. Lettre a M. Levrault de Strasbourg, 16 aout 1788, published in Lucas de Montigny, Mémoires biographiques (Paris, 1878) Vol. V, p. 188.

convoked by Necker in the hopes of obtaining some compromises from the most distinguished French subjects. Yet Necker was to be disappointed. A powerful reactionary current swept the meetings of the seven bureaux of the Notables, a current that blew down upon the meeting from the heights of conservative intransigeance. The block of conservatives comprised eleven of the fifteen prelates, 37 members of the Cours souveraines, and twelve members of the Council of State.[1] Only in the first Bureau, under the presidency of the king's older brother, the Comte de Provence, was the double representation of the third estate in the States-General approved. The real tone of the meeting was set by the aged Prince de Conti, who read to a group of notables meeting in the apartments of Monsieur on the 28 November a warning in which he denounced "the scandalous writings that spread trouble and divisions in all parts of the kingdom."[2] He requested the Count to show his royal brother "how important it is for the stability of his throne, for his authority, and for law and order that the new systems be forever forbidden and that the Constitution and the ancient forms be maintained in all their

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1. Jean-Marie-Nicolas Lucas de Montigny, Mémoires biographiques (Paris, 1834-1835). 8 volumes.

2. Procès-verbal de l'Assemblée des Notables, tenue a Versailles en l'année 1788 (Paris, 1789), p. 91.

vigor."[1] And it was the Prince de Conti, together with the Duc de Bourbon, the Duc d'Enghien, and the king's youngest brother, the Count d'Artois, who prepared a Mémoire, known as the Mémoire des Princes, that was presented to the king at the close of the Notables. This document, as Professor Egret has shown, represented the opinion of the majority of the Notables and marked the limits and the conditions of the concessions consented to by the aristocratic elements. To illustrate what these limits and conditions were, we turn to an excerpt from the text reproduced in the Archives parlementaires:

> That the third estate cease to attack the rights of the first two orders; cease to attack rights which are no less ancient than the monarchy itself and which should be as inalterable as the Constitution; that the third confine itself to the solicitation of a diminution of taxes, with which it may be overburdened. Then, the first two orders, recognizing in the third citizens who are dear to them, could, by the generosity of their sentiments, renounce the perogatives which are primarily pecuniary and consent to bear in most perfect equality their share of public expenses.[2]

No concessions then were obtained from the Notables on the essential elements in the tripartite program of the third estate. Moreover, both the form and the content of the Mémoire

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1. Ibid.

2. The text of the Mémoire des Princes is published in the Archives parlementaires, 1ère série, Vol. I, pp. 487-489. Printed copies of this work appear to have been circulated, but none has been found.

des Princes was offensive to the men of the third and their allies. The Abbé Morellet, philosophe and friend of Brienne's, commented in one of the most moderate reactions to the aristocratic statement:

> We no longer feel it right to dissimulate our ideas. In demanding that the burden of public expenses be shared in perfect equality, the third estate do not solicit a favor; it is, rather, justice that they ask to be rendered to them. It is not sufficient to say to 23 million men, fellow citizens all of the nobles and the clergy, "We renounce our prerogatives." They must of necessity say to them: "We must renounce them, and we do renounce them." And, above all, they must not pass this renunciation as the product of their generosity; for the right does not belong to a group (Ordre) of citizens to be generous to a whole people.[1]

The reaction that followed the announcement of the refusal of the Notables to approve the projects of the third--a reaction which nearly equalled in vigor that which followed the September arrêt of the Parlement de Paris approving the ancient forms of 1614 for the coming States--witnessed renewed criticism of the first estate because of the conservative position of the clergy in the Notables.[2] Even prior to the close of the Notables,

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1. Projet de réponse à un Mémoire répandu sous le titre de Mémoire des Princes [S.l., 21 déc. 1788, Pp. 51], p. 43.

2. For a sampling of some of the works which appeared after the Notables see: Ultimatum d'un citoyen du tiers état au Mémoire des Princes présenté au Roi [S.l., 1789. Pp. 67; Lettre sur le Mémoire des Princes présenté au Roi [S.l.n.d. Pp. 45]; Modestes observations sur le Mémoire des Princes, faites au nom des 23 millions de citoyens francais [Paris, 22 dec. 1788. Pp. 50]. A particularly trenchant attack upon the clergy and their intentions is De l'esprit du clergé dans les Etats-Généraux;

one writer, a "gentleman of Languedoc," expressed apprehension over the outcome of the meeting. "The Assembly of Notables is only a momentary extension of the king's council," he writes. "It can legally enact nothing contrary to the rights of the people and the constitution of the State."[1] With respect to the clergy, he queries: "Are the clergy in particular, and, especially the higher clergy, justified in asking for a third of the votes in the national assembly?" And further: "Do they constitute a third of the population of the State? Do they cultivate the land? Do they populate our kingdom? Do they pour out their wealth in proportion to the influence which they would exercise in the assembly?" Challenging the right of the clergy to attend the States-General altogether, he raises the chilling question: "Has this body, which is so jealous of its privileges, the well-established right to sit in the States-General and vote to levy taxes upon our properties when its own lands are inacessible to the tax-collector by virtue of prerogatives usurped in times of ignorance and superstition?"[2]

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essai suivi de quelques observations sur le Mémoire des Princes [S.l., 1789. Pp. 23].

1. Avis à propos donné aux languedociens par un gentilhomme [S.l.n.d. Pp. 16], p. 5.

2. Ibid., passim.

To understand the extent of the bitterness of feeling against the clergy and the nobility, one has but to peruse such a writing as the Injustice des prétentions du clergé et de la noblesse, written in early January 1789 by a vehement lay commentator. Although the writer announces as his target the pretentions of the two privileged orders, it is the clergy that bear the brunt of his searing attack. If we turn to the Bible, he remarks in an opening passage, we find no foundation for the clerical exemptions. Furthermore, Christ established no distinctions of rank among his divers disciples. To-day the successors of the apostles, through their abandonment of these basic primitive laws of Christianity, have ceased to be Christian, and they must suffer the consequences. The ecclesiastics of France must remember that God has told them to render unto Caesar that which belongs to Caesar and, further, that their kingdom is not of this world.[1] The author continues that it is time that the nation assembled recalled the clergy to their primitive devoirs and to the primitive cult, subjecting them in the process to the laws of the kingdom, to the charges and impositions of the government of which they are a part, however much they claim to be distinct and independent.[2]

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1. Injustice des prétensions du clergé et de la noblesse [S.l., 1789. Pp. 29], p. 2.

2. Ibid., p. 3.

"The clergy claims to be the first order in the State," he argues. "But this is an error that emanates from their abandonment of the laws of Christianity."[1] For their functions are all spiritual; the temporal is absolutely forbidden them. From this stems the evident principle that they can represent no order in the national assemblies in which mundane affairs will be conducted; they cannot sit therein without violating that law requiring them to renounce the affairs of the world to follow Jesus. Continuing his theme that the clergy have abandoned primitive Christianity, the author cites the evilness of their worldly ways and condemns the fastidiousness of the bishops, for example in assuming titles such as "Prince of the Church", "Eminence", and "Highness". They have usurped the right to hunt on their lands; they hold vassals and have serfs; they scandalize the people by their luxurious living and by the public maintenance of mistresses and concubines.

The needs of the State and the clamour of the public against the excessive wealth and the disorders in the morals of the clergy make it necessary to remake the clergy in the primitive image. Now the sum of all the revenues of the clergy of France is equal to one-half the territorial revenues of all the

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1. Ibid., p. 4.

properties of France. This, together with the fact that the useless and idle monks hold a great part of the clergy's wealth, invites the suppression of the religious orders and the confiscation and sale of all the wealth of the clergy.[1] The resulting circulation of wealth will do infinite good for the prosperity of the country. Another important result will be that the ecclesiastics will become citizens attached to the State. They will no longer constitute a separate body, but they will be appointed by the government and will receive salaries corresponding to those published in the Royal Almanach. The curés, as the most useful, will get significant increases; for example, those in major cities will have 6000 livres and those in the smallest villages, 1000 livres, with the others in between the two extremes. Furthermore, all non-essential ecclesiastical positions, such as priorships, would be abolished.[2]

Threats against ecclesiastical property were published with increasing frequency after the second Notables adjourned in mid-December 1788. Variations upon some of the standard ideas of the Injustice are found in works like the Reponse de M. . . à un abbé fanatique. The emphasis in this pamphlet is upon the "excessive and all-consuming pride" of the clergy and upon their

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1. Ibid., p. 10.
2. Ibid., pp. 11-14, passim.

scorn for the third estate. The lay author of this diatribe calls upon the king to confiscate Church property, sell it, and use the money to aid the needy of the kingdom. Henceforth, all clergy would be either pensioned as useless or paid a fair salary by the French monarch.[1]

In the writings of some members of the clergy published late in 1788 and early in January 1789, we see a growing concern with the threat to Church property and, in some instances, attempts to answer the clergy's critics. The Droit exclusif des curés au dixmes de leurs paroisses, written by a "curé of Anjou", is primarily concerned with establishing the Richarist doctrine of equality between curés and bishops in the hierarchy. And yet, as one peruses the 83 pages, it becomes apparent that the curé, too, is concerned with the matters of property and taxation. A great revolution is being prepared, he opines, and it shall return to an exhausted France its force and splendor. Yet, in the course of the revolution, "France presided over by great and benevolent monarch, will respect the property of bodies within just as she will those of individuals. . . ."[2] Evidence that our

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1. Réponse de M. . . à un abbé fanatique, ou moyen pour rendre le noble et le tiers-état satisfait [S.l.n.d. Pp. 20], p. 5. Although undated, this publication can be dated as late in December 1788 or very early in January 1789.

2. Droit exclusif des curés au dixmes de leurs paroisses, ou lettre à M. de Gr....., pour être presentée à l'assemblée générale des états de la nation; par un curé d'Anjou [S.l.n.d. Pp. 83], p. 76.

curé-author's point of view is indeed a moderate one is his concern that the clergy be permitted to reform themselves. His reasoning is as follows: In the present critical time, there are indeed sacrifices to be made for the general good of France. We are citizens and our common wish is to concur in the sacrifices. But if the clergy as a whole could be permitted to vote their own taxes to the government, they would at the same time free themselves from their present burden of the cupidity of the rich bénéficiers.[1]

A defense of the clergy's interests that is at once more competent and better reasoned is the Mémoire du clergé citoyen, en réponse aux attaques de la noblesse. This pamphlet represents a defense against the argument that since the clergy have nothing in the temporal realm except the usufruct from possessions, they have no right to participate in the States-General. "As priests and pontiffs, we do not form a political order," he writes "but we still have a civil existence."[2] It is argued that we are not citizens, that the annates and technical allegiance to Rome deprive us of our citizenship, but these things are mere formalities and cannot deprive us of our rights. The Concordat signed

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1. Ibid., p. 83.

2. Mémoire du clergé citoyen, en réponse aux attaques de la noblesse [S.l.n.d. Pp. 21], p. 7.

by Francis I said nothing about depriving the clergy of their quality as citizens. Nor can we give credence to this bizarre argument that the celibacy of the clergy deprives them of their citizenship. Finally, some persons maintain that in any case the clergy will be prevented from attending the States-General because their duties require them to be in residence. Such a sophism would forbid all clerical meetings--how absurd!

If there were no clergy present in the meetings of the States-General, the question might well be raised: Who would defend the interest of the poor? If current practices are followed, the impecunious may not even vote, much less represent their class. The nobles would doubtless be all too eager to assume this rôle—the nobles who are better qualified as oppressors of the people than as representatives of them. For it is the nobility who have abandoned the people to déprédateurs, who have put them in irons, and who tyrannize them. You of the nobility have nourished the people on the bread of bitterness and suffering.[1]

The nobles argue that the clergy should not have in the States a number of deputies equal to their own. They argue that the clergy are not as useful in the State as the nobility and

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1. Ibid., p. 11.

that the wealth of the clergy is less efficiently administered. They add that since the clergy produce less support to commerce and to society in general, they merit less consideration.[1]

The reply of the curé-author to the arguments against clerical wealth is of particular interest. He states that two types of church property must be distinguished, that of the lower clergy and that of the higher. Now, who can say that the property of the priests, the canons, and other lower clergy is less efficiently administered than that of the nobility? A propos the property of the higher clergy, it must be admitted that it is very badly managed. But how long has this been true, he asks? Is it not since the time when the nobility assumed all the large bénéfices of the Church, and ecclesiastics of the noble order, believing themselves superior to other men, separated themselves from the lower clergy, from the chapters, and thus from the disciplined life of the hierarchy? If the division between higher and lower clergy were broken, if the community of wealth was re-established between the bishop and his chapter and between the abbot and his monks, the complaints about mismanagement of property would soon cease.

Another example that testifies to the antipathy within

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1. Ibid., pp. 12-15. 2. Ibid., p. 16.

the lower clergy not only toward the higher clergy--for the evidence of this is overly abundant--but toward the aristocracy in general is found in the pamphlet called Sur l'ascendant aristocratique de la noblesse dans le clergé. The author, whose position as a curé is determined from internal evidence, places his confidence in the French king to aid the curés in their material needs and to protect the ecclesiastical property from the covetous nobility. He anticipates action from Louis XVI to reform the system of the portion congrue and to restore to the acting curés, that is to the vicaires perpetuels, the possession of their benefices, the cures primitifs. Furthermore, to remove the clergy's property from the reach of enemies, he would return it to the king's domains; henceforth the monarch himself "would determine who shall share in it."[1] The fears expressed by the author toward the nobles have a curious basis. His suspicion of and opposition to the aristocratic ascendancy is based upon what he calls "a common custom," which is "to consider the ecclesiastical property as a resource assured to the nobility because it is they who aid the poor."[2] The remainder of the author's criticisms stem in the main from the domination by the nobles of the

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1. Sur l'ascendant aristocratique de la noblesse dans le clergé [S.l.n.d. Pp. 48], p. 6.

2. Ibid., pp. 9-10.

bishoprics, the perpetuation of this domination, and the abuses within the clergy which result from it.

In the period, then, from the first agitation in Dauphiné in June, 1788 until the Règlement du Roi of 24 January 1789, which determined the electoral procedures for the States-General, many cross-currents of opinion blew within and around the clerical order. The hostility of the lower clergy for the abbots and bishops erupted in demands that in the provincial estates and in the States-General, the curés be given adequate representation. The intransigence of the upper clergy at the Second Assembly of the notables in resisting royal taxation of the property of the first two estates touched off the new threat that the clergy as a separate order be denied representation in the States-General, as well as more trenchant attacks on clerical property. There seemed to be a growing conviction among the laity that the clergy must not only bear its share of taxes but also sacrifice its great properties. The clerical writers answered these attacks the best they could. They suggested that the Church be allowed to reform itself and thus justify the use it made of the property, that clergy as citizens are entitled to be represented in the States-General, and that in the States the clergy will serve as defenders of the interests of the poor. A single clerical pamphlet attacking the nobility suggests that in

a show-down the curés of the first estate might join the third estate in common hostility to the privileged prelates and nobles.

Chapter V

TOWARD COOPERATION WITH THE THIRD ESTATE DECEMBER, 1788 TO JANUARY, 1789

By November and December 1788 the conflict between the privileged orders and the third estate dominated the scene in France. As has been seen in Chapter IV, the moderation that characterized critical writings of all sorts earlier in 1788 melted away as the fires of public opinion were rekindled by the unpopular declaration of the Parlement of Paris of 24 September 1788 that in the forthcoming States-General the voting should be as in 1614 by estate rather than by delegate and were fed anew by the intransigence of the second Notables in December of that year. The combination of privileged orders and third estate, united in opposition to royal absolutism and thus to the king's first minister, Loménie de Brienne, broke apart after the disgrace of Brienne as the separate and unequal nature of the goals of the two major factions became clear. On the one hand, the spokesmen for the privileged classes sought primarily to wield

political power and thus to maintain their privileged position--apart from the one concession of equal taxation, as formulated in the Mémoire des Princes.[1] On the other hand, the leaders of the third estate were determined not only to participate in the governing of France but also to obtain far-reaching reforms in society, the ultimate extent of which was not certain but which would certainly undermine, if not abolish, many of the privileges of the first two estates.

Jacques Mallet du Pan, the Swiss editor of the Mercure de France and a most perspicacious observer of the political events in his adopted country, wrote in November 1788 that in his view the prevailing disunity in France resulted from the torrent of "bizarre and anarchical pamphlets", whose authors, instead of demonstrating to the divers orders their essential community of interest, emphasized the basic conflict in goals. These writers, or propagandists, have succeeded, he declared, "in opening up a schism between the third estate and the two other orders."[2]

Brienne's successor, Jacques Necker, was not insensitive to public feeling and the demands of the third estate. His sense

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1. See Chapter IV, p. 150.

2. Jacques Mallet du Pan, Mémoires et correspondance (Paris, 1851), I, p. 163.

of justice no doubt led him to the conclusion that public opinion ought to guide the king and his ministry in its decisions.[1] Other factors, too, weighed with him as he pondered the demands of the spokesmen of the third for a doubling of that order's representation in the announced States. Not least among these influences upon the Director of Finances was the warning of the Paris bourse when the price of public stocks fell after the publication of the Mémoire des Princes, a sure signal that a government capitulation before the haughty declaration of the princes of the blood would invite greater fiscal troubles for the harried ministry.[2] Nor could Necker ignore the evidence that reached him from Angers and Dauphiné, for example, showing that certain nobles and curés in those provinces were sympathetic to the cause of the third; other reports indicated that some officers in the royal army favored the cause of the commons.[3] Yet, there is little doubt that Necker, cautious and Swiss and a banker, hesitated before the painful decision— painful perhaps because it

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1. Madame de Staël, Considérations sur les principaux événements de la révolution française, I, p. 179, published 1818 by M. le Duc de Broglie and M. le Baron de Staël in OEuvres complètes de Madame de Staël publieés par son fils, Vols. XII, XIII, XIV (Paris, 1820).

2. Jean Egret, La pré-révolution française (Paris, 1962), p. 361.

3. Madame de Staël, op. cit., I, p. 179.

involved a break with that class of society in which he numbered his closest acquaintances.[1] Nevertheless, hardly a week after the recommendation of the Notables had been submitted, Necker read a memorandum to the king urging that the third be given double representation. After lengthy discussion in council, on 27 December 1788, Necker's basic ideas prevailed and the decision that the number of deputies of the third estate should equal that of the other two orders was published under the unusual appellation of Résultat du conseil d'état du roi.[2] The other central question--whether the deputies of each order should meet and vote separately or all together in one group--remained to be answered at the Versailles meeting in May 1789. As a result of these decisions, Necker, his ministry, and Louis XVI became villains to the privileged groups and popular heroes to the rest of the population. In the provinces assemblies of nobles issued protests. In Brittany bloody conflicts broke out between patriots and nobles, and in Rennes, Nantes, and Besançon the peace was

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1. Mémoires de Malouet (Paris, 1874), I, pp. 220-221; Sur l'administration de M. Necker par lui-même (Paris, 1791), p. 47.

2. Résultat du conseil d'état du roi, tenu à Versailles le 27 décembre 1788; Rapport fait au roi dans son conseil par le ministre de ses finances (Paris, Imprimerie Royale, 1788). The text is to be found in the Archives Parlementaires, I, pp. 489-498.

troubled by mutinies and riots. The united front was shattered and the so-called revolt of the privileged classes was defeated. A new revolution directed against them had commenced.

Writing in January 1788, Mallet du Pan described how the public debate seemed to have changed its orientation since September 1788. "It is no longer. . . a question of king, of despotism, of the constitution: it is a war between the third estate and the two other orders. Six months ago," he continued "the Parlement was an idol; to-day everyone detests and condemns it."[1] Where once the men of the third had desired to work in common with the clergy and the nobility to resist arbitrary taxation, he noted, they now sought to beat the privileged orders with their chains.

A clergyman and man of letters who contributed in his own moderate fashion to the war on privileges in support of the third estate, the abbé André Morellet, regretted later the rôle he had played in this drama. Morellet, an economist and member of the Académie Française, had supported in his writings in December 1788 the public clamor for the doubling of the third. In his two works, the Observations sur la forme des États de 1614 and the Réponse au Mémoire des Princes, he defended respectively the position taken by the lonely Bureau of Monsieur

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1. Mallet du Pan, op. cit., I, p. 163.

favoring the third in double representation and condemned the extreme position of the princes of the blood in their memorial. Later, recapturing in his Mémoires something of the public sentiment of the times, he recalled the general feeling that the interests of the third would be sacrificed if that order's representation was not doubled. "The people found it difficult to believe," he wrote "and those with evil intentions hindered their believing, that the nobility and clergy would renounce their abusive privileges and submit to taxation like other citizens; that the nobility would abandon their seignorial rights; and that the clergy would ameliorate the lot of the curés à portion."[1] This incredulity, in the opinion of Morellet, was the most powerful weapon employed against the first two estates.

Morellet, as he looked back upon the period, regretted the line of his thinking at the time, which was moulded by the writings of his fellow philosophes and which, in general, emphasized liberty, toleration, a horror of despotism and superstition, and a burning desire to see abuses reformed. In his view he had neglected what seemed later the key issue--the right of property and its defense. Morellet considered the great tragedy,

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1. Mémoires inédits de l'Abbé Morellet (Paris, 1822), second edition, I, pp. 342-345.

both for his order and for him personally,[1] to have been the confiscation of the property of the Church. In retrospect then, Morellet saw as the fatal mistake of the clergy and the nobility their failure to defend their property and, moreover, their failure to stress, instead of their rights as orders, their veritable rights, those of property. From the very beginning, he stated, the doctrine should have been preached by the privileged classes that the right to reform the government belonged exclusively to property-holders. The clergy and nobility might then have confronted the demands of the third as follows:

> The territorial property, that great object of interest of all the nation, is almost entirely in our hands. It thus remains for the nation, and even that part of the nation which is occupied in work on the farms as artisans, to defend the property from all attack. It is thus requisite that the National Assembly, granted extensive powers, shall be composed of men interested in the conservation of property, men who are sufficiently enlightened to recognize the enemies of property and who have enough leisure to occupy themselves with this goal of protection. And in property-holders alone are all these necessary qualities to be found.[2]

Such reasoning, said Morellet, would have confounded the partisans of democratic representation. Yet, out of pride and prejudice, the two privileged orders abstained from such an argu-

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1. He was ruined when in June 1790 he was forced to sell the house and lands attached to his benefice. See his Mémoires, I, pp. 377-378.

2. Ibid., I, 360.

ment. They did not see that in admitting a certain number of the bourgeoisie--men of law, merchants, and entrepreneurs--to sit with them as equals, they would have gained an equal number of defenders of their real and legitimate interests. Nor, on the other hand, did the spokesmen of the third estate argue that since some property was now in their hands they had a right to participate in "the government of property." Instead, as with Sieyès, they argued according to numerical superiority--25 millions of men versus some 300,000 in the clergy and nobility. And the Abbé Morellet admits with some remorse and not a little shame that he, too, had been caught up at the time in the Sieyèsan line of argument.[1]

The Abbé Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyès, whose pamphlet entitled Qu'est-ce que le tiers état? (published in January 1789) was generally regarded by contemporaries[2] as one of the influential publications of the day, had pursued a career in the Church in great measure because of the opportunity it offered to one of common birth to attain some distinction and perhaps eventually a lucrative benefice.[3] The son of a petit fonctionnaire de

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1. Ibid., I, 362-363.

2. Cf. Malouet, op. cit., I, 218; Morellet, op. cit., I, 362.

3. See "Lettre de Gros de Besplas à Honoré Sieyès," le 26 avril 1774 in O. Teissier, Documents inédites, la jeunesses de l'Abbé Sieyès (Marseille, 1897), p. 10, and other letters pp. 8-13, passim.

province, Sieyès had with some difficulty obtained the money for studies at the famous Seminary of Saint-Sulpice of Paris where he entered the petit séminaire in 1765, some five years before a future collaborator, the young Talleyrand, would enter as a student in the more fashionable grand séminaire. Despite continual financial troubles, he remained for five years to complete his license. Climbing slowly the ladder of the hierarchy, Sieyès obtained a canon's post in Brittany, then was called in succession to Tréguier and Chartres by his patron, Jean-Baptiste-Joseph de Lubersac, who held in turn the bishoprics there. During the ten-odd years before he was finally installed as Grand-Vicaire at Chartres, Sieyès lived on a meagre income and was continually frustrated in his attempts to obtain a lucrative benefice; his correspondence during this period reflects a bitter and taciturn nature that he retained throughout his career.[1]

As the associate of the worldly and brilliant Lubersac, Sieyès traveled in foreign lands, frequented the best Paris salon society, and appears to have led an active social life. A free-thinker, he was imbued with the spirit of the philosophes and participated in the Club de Valois, the Society of the Thirty, and the masonic lodge of the neuf soeurs, where he encountered

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1. Cf. Néton, Sieyès d'après des documents inedits (Paris, 1900), p. 42.

Lafayette, Talleyrand, Condorcet, Mirabeau, and Lameth.[1] The last months of 1788 seem to have been decisive for Sieyès. Serving as a deputy in the Provincial Assembly of Orléans, he had gained a practical grasp of the problems confronting the Old Régime. He had become convinced of the necessity to reconstruct society on rational bases; he would not in the process accept any tradition, any authority. He had seen the attempts at reforms fail either through the timidity of those who proposed them or the resistance of vested interests. None of the king's principal ministers satisfied Sieyès: neither Calonne, whose initiative came too late; nor Brienne, who provoked the scorn of the populace; nor Necker, who, although better than the other two, was still not of the stature needed to provide France with a constitution. Like many others, Sieyès had placed his confidence in the Paris Parlement only to be deceived when he discovered that "this mighty body was neither veritably enlightened nor truly energetic."[2]

He had begun to set down his ideas on the political situation even prior to the dismissal of Necker. His first pamph-

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1. For the best résumé of the political activity of Sieyès, see Paul Bastid, Sieyès et sa pensée (Paris, 1939), p. 48, notes 3-7.

2. Ibid., p. 52.

let, of that trilogy which was to win for him a place with Target, the Count of Antraigues, and Mirabeau as the most discussed pamphleteers of the day, was entitled Essai sur les privilèges, published in November 1788.[1] In it he argues that honors and privileges justified neither by common law nor by public service are absurd and iniquitous. As an ecclesiastic, Sieyès is careful to avoid specific comments upon the first estate; yet some of his general remarks, such as those upon the "privileged mendicity" of the first two orders, show that his allegiance to the clerical order was, if not broken, at least stretched to the breaking point. The success of the Essai led Sieyès to publish a second pamphlet, which actually had been written earlier, Vues sur les moyens d'exécution dont les representants de la France pourront disposer en 1789. It struck a positive note: the rights of the nation must be identified with the rights of the third estate. Only the nation may levy new taxes, and its representatives, in saving the State from bankruptcy, may take and retain the legislative power.[2] Both pamph-

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1. Essai sur les privilèges [S.l., 1788. Pp. 54]. The first edition was published in November 1788 according to the editor's note in the second edition of January 1789.

2. Vues sur les moyens d'éxécution dont les représentants de la France pourront disposer en 1789 [S.l., 1789. Pp. 161], passim.

lets went through two editions. During the second Assembly of Notables he prepared a third work which, published after the Résultat of the Council of the 27 December, was his famous pamphlet Qulest-ce que le tien-état?[1] This quickly sold four editions.

Three dramatic questions and their answers comprise the best-remembered portion of Sieyès' masterful polemic:

"What is the third estate? --Everything.
What has it been up till now in the political order? --Nothing.
What does it ask to become? --Something."

With that inflexible logic and precision of statement which reveal him as a product of the same superb ecclesiastical education as Talleyrand, Sieyès argues that the third estate is itself a complete nation, that the privileged orders have no a priori position in the regular social organization of the nation, and that only those who can justify their place through performance of particular work or public functions merit a place in it. Nobles, ecclesiastics, magistrates, and administrators are but functionaries. The decision to accord double representation to the third is the logical triumph of reason; for what, in effect, do some 200,000 privileged persons (110,000 nobles and 82,000

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1. Qu'est-ce que le tiers-état? [S.l., 1789, Pp. 127].

clergy) count before a nation of 25 or 26 millions of people?

Within the clergy, as within the State, Sieyès sees great iniquity in the distribution of wealth. The upper clergy, the bishops, the canons, and the monks, dominate. The lower clergy have but a pitiful portion congrue. Some twenty-eight thousand privileged ecclesiastics hold sway over 54,000 oppressed and miserable lower clergy. Yet Sieyès says not a word in his momentous work about reform of his own clerical order. For purposes of argument, at least, he adopts the unique viewpoint of a citizen of the third. No special considerations of his own particular order were thus permitted, for they might detract from the rigid structure of his arguments against privileges and the privileged classes.

With regard to the mild concessions of the privileged orders, Sieyès states that the leaders of these groups never weary of remarking that all is equal amongst the orders once pecuniary exemptions are renounced. Yet, if all be equal, what is it that they fear from the demands of the third estate? Could anyone imagine the third estate's wishing to harm itself by attacking a common interest? If all is indeed equal, he asks, why do we witness these continued efforts to prevent the third estate from escaping its subservient condition of political nullity? He continues: "If abuses and disorders continue to flourish in France, independently of those connected with the taxes, please

explain to me how all can be equal between him who profits by abuses and him who suffers by them. If all is equal, then it is in the spirit of equality that the third estate is excluded from all posts and places which have some distinction."

In the last section of his famous pamphlet, the part which deals with what is to be done, Sieyès formulates a creed by which the third estate, considering itself the nation, must refuse to co-operate with the privileged classes, must form the national assembly itself, and must provoke a scission from the two other orders. Such a course has now become necessary because the third estate has waited in vain for the co-operation of all the classes to restore its political rights and the enjoyment of its civil rights. The fear that these abuses will be removed inspires the first two orders with an anxiety which far exceeds their desire for liberty. Confronted with the choice between liberty and certain odious privileges, they have chosen the latter. Their soul has identified itself with the favors of servitude. To-day they dread that same States-General they formerly invoked so arduously. All is well for them; they have nothing more of which to complain except the spirit of innovation; they no longer lack anything; fear has given them a constitution. The third estate must perceive, conditions being as they are, that it can expect nothing except what it can gain by its courage and enlightenment. Reason and justice are on its side; it must

appeal to them with all its might. The time is past to work for the conciliation of the parties.[1]

At the same time that Sieyès argued so masterfully to equate the interests and rights of the third estate with those of the entire French nation, other ecclesiastical writers, whose personal identification with the clerical order was doubtless closer than that of the Vicar-General of Chartres, were also concerned with the plight of their brothers of the third and, in particular, with the conditions of the poorer segment thereof. Yet the goal of these authors, most of whom were curés, was to demonstrate that the special position of the lower clergy was one of close attunement to the poor of the kingdom and of responsibility for their welfare. This argument represented but another reason, in addition to numerical superiority, why in their view the curés and vicaires should have equal representation with the upper clergy in the delegation from the first estate to the States-General.

Probably the most forceful of the writings to appear in January 1789 in support of equal representation for the lower clergy was the Très-humble requête au roi. This pamphlet contained an elaborate set of arguments to support the case for equal numbers from higher and lower clergy in the States. Couched

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1. Ibid., passim.

in the somewhat obsequious prose that etiquette demanded in a communication intended ultimately for the king, this petition affirmed that members of the lower clergy comprised three-fifths of the total number of Catholic ecclesiastics. Then, pursuing a familiar theme, it stated that the lower clergy were engaged in the charitable care of some 9,000,000 impecunious persons: the infirm, the aged, young children, widows, and orphans. Lacking in spokesmen to communicate their wishes to the government, these poor had made known to their local curés, in the course of daily ministrations, the desires, secrets, and chagrins which they harbored. The lower clergy, by virtue of its numerical position and by the trust of the poor who sought to improve their lot, should be given a representation in the delegation of the first estate equal to that of the other ecclesiastics of the hierarchy.[1]

Another familiar argument reinforced the above conclusion. The parish priests, it was pointed out, served as preservers of public order and tranquility. Through their efforts of persuasion and conciliation they contributed greatly to the maintenance of order and morality among the people. For the curés, in

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1. Très-humble requête au roi, presentée par les curés et les prêtres chargés du ministère pastoral en France; ou ils exposent combien il est à propos que leurs représentants aux Etats-Généraux soient égaux en nombre à ceux du clergé supérieur et des bénéficiers ou autres ecclésiastiques, qui n'omt point chargé de peuple [S.l., 1789. Pp. 16], pp. 4-12, passim.

the words of Necker, "should be counted among the members of the State most worthy of protection"[1] and of being called to the general assembly.[2]

The curés argue, furthermore, that the presence of a considerable number of priests in the assembly would restore the shattered confidence of a people almost without hope: the indigent class saw in the priests a symbol of protection and paternalism, while the well-off class (classe aisée) regarded them as confidants and good friends. All the members of the third estate, it was affirmed, would take courage at the presence of curés in the meeting; they would then be assured that the details of their oppression would be laid before His Majesty, that their interests would be defended with zeal, and that a means of correcting the evils would be found, discussed, and executed. In the name of the curés of the kingdom and of the unfortunate poor, who had inspired this humble request, prayers were offered for the long life of a benevolent king, "le restaurateur de la patrie."[3]

In their concern to win an equal number of deputies in

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1. This statement, italicized in the pamphlet, is from Necker's Administration des finances, op. cit., t. II, chap. 9, pp. 218-219; Ibid., p. 14.

2. Ibid., p. 14.

3. Ibid., pp. 14-16.

the States-General, the curé authors of the Pétition des curés, which was written probably in December 1788, undertake an even more passionate pleading for an identification with the interests of the underprivileged of the third estate. Moreover, the petitioners express in the course of the period: doubling of the third's representation; vote by head; union of all the orders; renunciation of pecuniary privileges by the clergy; opposition to the aristocratic domination of the higher clergy in the hierarchy; bitter antagonism to the canons and regular clergy; and vigorous pleading for an increase in the income of the lower clergy. In the opening pages, they state a dominant theme:

> The States-General will soon be assembled: the destiny of France will be in its hands. . . the well-being of France depends absolutely upon the composition of the States-General . . . We are members of the clergy; but we are also the protectors of the poor, who form a considerable part of the third estate, and we must defend them rather than the particular interests of the body of which we are members. . . .[1]

After their declaration of alliance with the third estate, the curés enunciate demands whereby the third's representation in the coming assembly shall be increased to equal that of the other estates combined. Following logically from this proposition, of course, is the principle of vote by head, for without the second part, the first is but an empty gesture.

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1. Pétition des curés [S.l.n.d. Pp. 14], pp. 1-2.

Consistently throughout, the authors maintain that the deplorable condition of the poor requires them to speak for this section of the third and to strive to increase the number of the third's delegation in the assembly.

From their daily contact with the masses of the people, the curés paint a grim portrait of the typical peasant. Misery and suffering reigned amongst these poorer classes. The burden of care for the poor fell largely on the parish churches; the great nobles (les grands) who possessed lands within the parish districts rarely appeared except to collect their revenue, and even then they seldom contributed toward the maintenance of the poor. With only 750 livres, state the curés, it is quite impossible to maintain themselves and still aid the poor.[1] Hence they request a supplement to their income that would in effect double it to a sum of 1500 livres. They stipulate further that the supplement be taken from "the immense revenues of the priories, the abbeys, and the monasteries that are found in each diocese."[2] Like so many pamphlet writers of the day, the curés, we see, were equipped with a strong anti-monastic bias, but, unlike most, they sought, through their own efforts against the monks, to obtain their own remuneration. Proceeding on a utili-

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1. Ibid., pp. 8-9. 2. Ibid., p. 10.

tarian basis, they queried:

> Is it necessary that a monk or an abbot possess several benefices at a time, and that he have an income of 50, 80, or 100,000 livres, while a priest has only 750? Is he more useful? Does he do more good? Everyone knows that these gros bénéficiers are but idle loafers, and that they spend the money of the poor in the most scandalous fashion--it is their conduct which occasions all the abusive satire against the Church. . . .[1]

The writers of the Pétition renounce their traditional pecuniary privileges as members of the first estate and state their willingness to bear their share of the tax burden "like all citizens". At the same time, the curés demand that taxes be levied equally upon all persons without distinction of rank or birth.[2]

Implicit in the Pétition and in the Très-humble requête is the notion that the king was poorly informed as to the real conditions among his subjects: his villainous advisers concealed the truth from him and often misled him. In his message convoking the States-General, Louis XVI had spoken warmly of the prospect of establishing contact with his subjects and gathering their advice:

> It is with satisfaction that His Majesty envisages the moment when he will be surrounded by the representatives of the generous and fidèle nation over which he has the good fortune to govern. Assured of gathering the happy effects of

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1. Ibid., p. 11.
2. Ibid., p. 10.

> their zeal and love, he is comforted even now by the hope of seeing tranquil and serene days succeed those of storm and inquietude. . . .[1]

The duty then of the delegates from the lower clergy and the third estate was to show to their benevolent king that the account presented at court was far from reality, to inform Louis of the "extreme state of misery throughout the countryside." The king's message had hinted that sacrifices might be demanded of some groups to offset the dire condition of the treasury. In these two works, the curés reply with a promise of "complete willingness" to make all the sacrifices demanded for the public well-being and the prosperity of the country.[2]

Gradually, then, in January 1789 after the royal decree to double the third's representation, the curés in certain regions of the kingdom began to organize to obtain within the representation of the clerical order in the States-General that same equality won by their brethren of the third in the entire assembly. The curés of Dauphiné continued to spark the activities of lower clergy throughout France, not only indirectly by example but also directly by counsel and precept. They of-

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1. A.P., I, p. 87.

2. Pétition des curés, p. 14; Très-humble requête, pp. 10-16, passim.

fered advice and encouragement, for example, to the Breton curés in the published communiqué, Les curés de Dauphiné à leurs confrères les recteurs de Bretagne. The work reveals how deep was the division between lower and higher clergy in the French hierarchy. In the opening pages the curés of Dauphiné declare themselves saddened by the situation in Brittany, by the violence of the attempts at despotism engendered by those "abettors of feudal and magistral aristocracy." They voice dismay at the open conflict between the people on the one hand and the nobility (parlement and higher clergy) on the other. What position shall the conscientious curé adopt amidst the turmoil of conflicting loyalties characterizing the Breton revolt?

> Do not let the name and authority of your bishops sway you: If they are good citizens, they will make a common cause with the people; if they are infected with the principles of tyranny, do not listen to them. . . . When it is a question of theological matters, of questions purely spiritual and relative to the guidance of souls, you should regard your bishops as heads of the ecclesiastical hierarchy and should follow their counsels so long as there is nothing contrary either to the doctrine as it is universally known, or to your consciences. But make no mistake: in matters civil and political, the bishops are only citizens like us and their opinion should not bind us at all.[1]

In somewhat simplistic fashion, the curés of Dauphiné link the interests of the third with their own. "If the people

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1. Les curés de Dauphiné, à leurs confrères les recteurs de Bretagne [S.l., 1789. Pp. 25], pp. 3-4; the italics are mine.

emerge from their oppression," they write "you shall emerge from the humiliation--if not from the debasement--into which the higher clergy has plunged you and held you so long."[1] How can you Breton curés expect to obtain any consideration, they query, so long as you are but the pastors of a flock of slaves? You shall not obtain the plenitude of your rights until the time when the people obtain theirs. Furthermore, in fighting for themselves, the people are fighting for you. Have you not observed with what zeal the third estate of your province solicited your admission to the national assembly and the registration in Brittany of the last law augmenting the portion congrue?

Combining then Richerist notions with secular ones of utility and equality, the curés of Dauphiné contend that there is nothing to be feared from the prelates of the Church. Has not our august mission the same source as theirs?, they ask. Are we not irremovable as they are? Are we not, each of us, bishops in our own parish? Are we not as equal to them as were the 72 disciples to the 12 apostles? Proceeding with their rhetorical devices, they borrow a line from Sieyès in querying: "Forty thousand pastors, the élite of the third estate by virtue of their education, their enlightenment, their virtues, forty

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1. Ibid., p. 11.

thousand pastors necessary and dear to their flocks--should they not prevail over 120 bishops, creations of cabal and intrigue, and almost all of whom are strangers to their dioceses?"[1] If we scrupulously fulfill our duties in society, then in the eyes of the nation the brilliance of the mitre will pale before the sterling utility of our services. From the conviction of the fundamental truth of this should spring new respect and self-confidence for our position:

> You have but to regard your <u>own</u> importance, your <u>own</u> utility, the <u>grandeur</u> and sublimity of your functions; and, without emerging beyond the bounds of modesty which should characterize you, you should appreciate your own value. At the foot of the altar, in the pulpit of truth, you are superior to the nobles. In the eyes of the law you are their equals. Do you not possess sufficient self-esteem to agree with the laws?[2]

Amidst the harrassing confusion of the revolt in Brittany, they plead, you must not help the nobles in their attempts to enslave the people. Nor should you trust the <u>Parlement</u> of Rennes as we trust that of Dauphiné. The members of ours have shown themselves to be solid ramparts of public liberty, but yours have allied themselves with the despotic nobility.[3] Use your influence with the people to maintain love, respect, and submission to the king and his laws. Turn religion against re-

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1. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 14.
2. <u>Ibid</u>., pp. 14-15.
3. <u>Ibid</u>., p. 16.

volts and sedition from the masses. But do not oppose liberty.[1]

At Bourges, a meeting of curés drew up a letter to Necker[2] declaring "that they had the greatest interest in supporting" the Mémoire of the curés of the diocese of Angers, and they requested that their adherence to this Mémoire be communicated to the king.[3] At Orléans, meeting at the home of their dean, the curés read the divers writings being circulated, prepared a list of matters to be discussed and proposed in their diocese, and then adjourned on 28 January 1789. They approved and had printed a report entitled Extrait des délibérations et arrêté des curés d'Orléans, relativement à la convocation des Etats-Généraux. In this document they declare themselves confident that their class will be adequately represented in the electoral assemblies and in the States-General, for they feel that "the spirit of justice and impartiality will reign amongst the electors." Their list of goals is a standard one and includes the

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1. Ibid., pp. 24-25.

2. See Projet d'un Mémoire des curés du diocèse d'Angers, relativement à la convocation des Etats-Généraux and the analysis thereof Chapter IV, pp. 134-140.

3. Antonin Proust, Archives de l'Ouest (Paris, n.d.), IV, pp. 265-266. "Lettre de Messieurs les curés de la Ville de Bourges, à Monsieur le Directeur Général des Finances, 23 janvier 1789."

abolition of the casuel forcé; the increase in the portion congrue; representation of curés in all general assemblies of clergy; curé representation on the bureaux diocesains; abolition of the don gratuit and the payment by ecclesiastics of their share of the taxes. Moreover, the curés affirm the right of the States-General to reform the material evils within the Gallican Church.[1] At Bordeaux, Saintes, Clermont, and Nancy, there were similar meetings wherein the curés evince their concern with the coming National Assembly and the need for equal representation within it.[2]

Especially at Nancy, the capitol city of Lorraine, the curés achieved an efficiency of organization and publication equalling if not surpassing that obtaining earlier in Dauphiné and Angers. Absorbed as in other major centers in attaining

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1. Extrait des délibérations et arrêté des curés d'Orléans, relativement à la convocation des Etats-Généraux [S.l.n.d. Pp. 23], passim.

2. At Bordeaux, the curés in an Adresse au roi of 27 January 1789 declared themselves willing to support "with zeal" all public charges. They requested of the king that he allot to the "second class", the parish priests, special representatives of a number equal to those of the first class. See Charles L. Chassin, Les Cahiers des curés (Paris, 1882), p. 123, note 2. In a Mémoire du corps des curés du diocèse de Saintes, the curés of Saintes made exactly the same request. See Chassin, op. cit., p. 124, note 1. The curés of the two Flanders, united in a meeting with those of la Flandre wallonne, drew up similar Mémoires which were sent to Necker and are now in the Archives Nationales in the series B III (72, 143, 169).

short-range goals, the curés of Nancy devoted their energies in January 1789 not to a much-needed defense of Church property nor to vain pleas for a general improvement of their position in the hierarchy but to the hard realities of local organization and the effort to obtain a representation equal to that of the higher clergy. Since June 1787, when a royal edict had decreed the creation of provincial assemblies, including one at Nancy, the members of the lower clergy of Lorraine and particularly the curés had complained continually over the lack of proportional representation in the regional assembly--proportional, that is, to that to which they had a right "by virtue of their number and of the amount of revenue which they paid."[1] The curés did not miss an opportunity, according to the Abbé Guilbert, to manifest their discontent and to state their griefs over the matter of representation.[2] Even the promises of the Bishop of Nancy, Msgr.

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1. The material in this section on the curés at Lorraine is based primarily upon quotations from a Mss. entitled "Conduite des curés du bailliage de Nancy depuis le 8 juillet 1787 jusqu'à la députation aux Etats-Généraux" in 48 pages by the Abbé Charles-Louis Guilbert, Curé de Saint-Sébastien de Nancy, written in March-April 1789. This manuscript is in the Bibliothèque du Grand Séminaire de Nancy and was used by L. Jérôme in his Les élections et les cahiers du clergé lorrain (Paris and Nancy, 1899). Hereafter cited as Guilbert, Conduite des curés (Jérôme, op. cit.).

2. The Provincial Assembly of Lorraine by the terms of the Règlement of 8 July 1787 was to be composed of 48 members, of which 24 were designated directly by the king and the remaining 24 chosen by the first group. Of the 48 members, 12 were

de Fontanes, to admit more curés to future meetings could not calm the fury of their discontent. An occasion for action was provided by the decision in the last months of 1788 to replace the ineffectual Provincial Assembly with an elected États-Provinciaux. The curés organized to win representatives in the new États and met regularly at the home of the Curé of Saint-Sébastien, Charles-Louis Guilbert, who became the soul of the curé movement. The first skirmish came over the meeting on 22 December 1788 of the nobles and clergy at the Hôtel de Ville at Nancy to draw up tentative plans for the États. Guilbert, who was ill during this period, had drawn up a Mémoire to present the curés' position to this preliminary meeting. For unknown reasons, the memorial was not read at the meeting and a colleague of Guilbert's, the Curé of Saint-Vincent-Saint-Fiacre, Abbé Gabriel Mollevaut, took the initiative.[1] In a letter to the President of the Assembly, Custine d'Aufflance, he declared that the curés of the region:

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to be taken from the clergy, 12 from the nobility, and 24 from the third estate. Amongst the 12 chosen from the clergy, only one was a curé. See Conduite des curés, p. 2 (Jérôme, op. cit., p. 11, note 1).

1. A short but competent account of this ecclesiastic and his rôle in the organization of the curés in Lorraine is that of H. J. Thiriet, L'abbé Gabriel Mollevaut, docteur en théologie, premier curé de la paroisse Saint-Vincent-Saint-Fiacre à Nancy (Nancy, 1886).

> hoped that the so-called higher clergy would not succeed in excluding them from the États. The love of public welfare that animates them, the services they have rendered to the country, the knowledge they have of the needs and resources of the province--these are the titles that qualify them to sit in the meetings. There are perhaps none who wish personally to be admitted; probably all are apprehensive of this honor. But doubtless, too, there is none who will not claim for their order a right which is that of all citizens, whatever their station.[1]

Guilbert, recovered from his malady, felt that the letter was not strong enough and sent his own sentiments in a more energetic communiqué. He affirmed that the curé "could not be excluded under whatever pretext from the assemblies of the clergy."[2]

It was a few weeks later, however, at the time of the meeting of the General [Provincial] Assembly of the Three Orders, a preliminary assembly convened with the tacit consent of the government, that the curé party brought to bear the pressure their superior organization and unity enabled them to exert. In the weeks prior to the meeting of the Three Orders on 20 January 1789, the curés of Nancy had been quite active in organizing the priests of the province. During the first few days of January Guilbert had thought it wise to inform the curés of Lorraine of the coming meeting and to solicit their support. Despite the

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1. Guilbert, Conduite des curés, p. 10 (Jérôme, op. cit., p. 14).

2. Ibid.

brevity of time and the rigors of winter, including heavy snows that impeded the mails, he had drawn up and dispatched a letter to a number of his colleagues in which he declared:

> You are doubtless aware that the twentieth instant there will be a general assembly meeting here to organize our États-Provinciaux. The project of the curés of Nancy and the environs is to demand in this meeting that the curés and other secular ecclesiastics be allotted at least as many representatives in the States as those allotted the so-called higher clergy, which comprise the bishops, the abbots, the priors, the chapitres, etc.
>
> We shall make this demand in the name of all and this is perhaps the only favorable occasion to obtain for our order the consideration due to it. I have taken upon myself the task of informing you, doubting not a moment your wishes in a matter so important for all of us. Please thus prepare a letter stating your support and have it signed by several of your colleagues. As you can see, however, there is no time to lose.[1]

According to Guilbert's own account, a number of curés wrote him to express their support and, armed with these letters, he prepared to confront the higher clergy with his proposals.

Guilbert delivered his discourse on 20 January 1789, the opening day of the Assembly of the Three Orders. In it he stated the curés' demands for equal representation, their renunciation of tax exemption, and their willingness to share the tax burden. His speech, by his own account, excited vigorous opposition from certain persons, "above all from recently-created peers and from

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1. Guilbert, Conduite des curés, p. 14 (Jérôme, op. cit., p. 14, note 2).

those ecclesiastics who were more concerned with their fiefs than with honor and charity."[1]

To engender greater support amongst the curés of the province for their position in the Assembly, three curés, of whom the chief was the famous Abbé Henri Grégoire, later Bishop of Blois and leader of the Constitutional Church in France, at the time a curé and Commissaire in the order of the clergy, prepared a pamphlet, which was sent to the curés of the chief towns of the province and which contained a copy of Guilbert's speech. Entitled simply À MM. les curés lorrains et autres ecclésiastiques seculiers du diocèse de Metz, the pamphlet solicited the support of those curés who had not already written to Guilbert and requested that letters be sent either to Grégoire or to Guilbert. At the same time, Grégoire and his colleagues, Valentin and Didry, defined their position as concerning which aspect of the curés' dual role, (as priests and members of the first estate or as citizens), was to dominate in these times. In unequivocal terms they wrote:

> As any general protest movement must be formed of individual reclamations, it is of interest, Messieurs, that you make manifest your sentiments in the present circumstances. At this moment, a holy energy animates all the minds in the third estate; a precious union unites them. We are citizens first. [Nous sommes d'abord citoyens.] In many respects,

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1. Ibid., p. 15 (Jérôme, op. cit., p. 16, note 1).

> all other qualities are effaced before this one, which conquers all interests and reconciles all hearts. Yet as curés, we do have rights. In twelve centuries such a favorable occasion to turn to account these rights and to develop patriotic sentiments has never presented itself.[1]

Grégoire and his associates consequently urged the curés to circulate the pamphlet and obtain signatures:

> We pray you in the name of a crowd of colleagues meeting at Nancy to send your letters of adherence by which you declare, as we have done with the order of nobility, that you consent willingly to being included with the third estate in a common form of pecuniary impositions. You will then ask that the order of curés and, in general, the secular clergy of the second order, be represented through their deputies in the Provincial States and the States-General.[2]

The result of the appeal, according to Guilbert, was some 700 signatures from the ecclesiastics of the province.[3]

Such was the situation amongst the clergy of Lorraine when in the middle of January 1789 came the news that the king had decided to convoke the States-General for the beginning of May. From this time attention was focused primarily upon the States-General, and the importance of the Provincial States immediately waned. Guilbert, with more than a touch of bitterness,

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1. A MM. les curés lorrains et autres ecclésiastiques seculiers du diocèse de Metz [Nancy, 22 janvier 1789. Pp. 4], p. 2.

2. Ibid., p. 3.

3. Guilbert, Conduite des curés, p. 15 (Jérôme, op. cit., p. 16).

noted the air of opportunism that pervaded the clergy:

> Now people were concerned only slightly with the Provincial States. All heads were turned in our order as in the others at the prospect of sitting in the States-General and each man considered himself worthier than the others for this honor. Personal pride thus engendered cabales and each man laid plans to satisfy its yearnings.[1]

In Lorraine, as throughout France, the curés were greatly encouraged in their ambitions by the electoral system for the first estate established by Necker in the Règlement du roi of 24 January 1789. The plan specified elections on two levels: first, primary elections at the lower level of the parish, monastery, or cathedral chapter to choose delegates for a general assembly in the principal town of the bailiwick or constituency; and, second, elections by each general assembly of deputies for the States-General elections that were to be held not later than 16 March 1789.[2]

To choose primary electors, the clergy of each cathedral chapter were to meet in two sections: the one, composed of canons, was to elect one deputy for each ten persons present; the other, comprising the remaining clerics, was to select one deputy for each twenty. Monasteries and other bodies of regular

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1. Ibid., p. 21 (Jérome, op. cit., p. 17).

2. Règlement fait par le roi pour l'exécution des lettres de convocation du 24 janvier 1789; Article IX, A.P., I, 545.

clergy were to elect one deputy to represent each group. The right to attend the general assembly as a primary elector was accorded each ecclesiastic who possessed a benefice; this category would thus embrace all bishops and all curés. One restriction, however, was imposed upon the curés: those who lived farther than two "leagues" [about five miles, that is] from the place of the assembly must vote by proxy, unless they had a vicaire to replace them during their absence from their parish. In each town, moreover, those ecclesiastics who possessed no benefice were to assemble at the residence of the curé of the parish; there they were to select one deputy for each twenty present--not counting the curé, to whom the right to attend the assembly already belonged by reason of his benefice. All other clerics engaged in the orders, not residents of towns, who were twenty-five years of age, born French or naturalized, were to appear at the assemblies in person.[1]

Necker's system gave the curés a numerical advantage over the regular clergy and the prelates in the general assemblies and in the electoral operations, especially if all those curés who were eligible attended the meetings. In Lorraine, moreover, as in Angers[2] and other areas, public opinion as ex-

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1. Ibid., Article X; Article XI, pp. 545-546; Article XII, p. 546; Article XIV; Article XV; Article XVI.

2. See McManners, op. cit., p. 220.

pressed in the pamphlet press showed itself sympathetic to the curés' cause. Writers from the third estate, such as M. Antoine, deputy-to-be from Sarreguemines and lieutenant général of the bailiwick of Boulay, argued for the election of curés to the States-General. Repeating some of the curés' own standard arguments, he writes:

> The clergy should choose curés; for these ecclesiastics, by their position and their functions, are in a better situation to know the needs of the people, from whom it may be necessary temporarily to obtain certain sacrifices while, at the same time, preparing them for future days that will be calmer and happier ones. The bishops and large beneficeholders are, by their manner of life and outlook, ill-fitted for present operations. They are, moreover, too closely identified with the government through their birth, their status, and their hopes.[1]

With the backing both within and without the clergy which he had won, Guilbert and his colleagues redoubled their efforts. Located as he was at the geographical center of his region and member of the permanent committee of correspondence that had been created after the meeting of the three orders, the curé of Saint-Sebastien de Nancy was better placed than anyone to receive and transmit information, organize meetings, and, in general, lead the movement of the lower clergy in Lorraine. In

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1. Essai sur les assemblées de communautés, de bailliages, et d'arrondissemens de la Lorraine, destinées à procéder tant aux élections qu'à la rédaction des cahiers pour les Etats-Généraux, présenté à ces assemblées par un citoyen [Paris, 1789. Pp. 14]. By M. Antoine d'après Jérôme, op. cit., p. 18, note 1.

a letter of 23 February, for example, he advised the curés to determine in advance whom they would vote for in each canton, the man, that is, "judged the most courageous and the most capable." By voting together the curés could dominate the elections.[1]

In Lorraine, then, as throughout France, the curés prepared in February and March 1789 for the coming elections. Aided by the liberal electoral procedures of Necker, the curés saw that the key to the accomplishment of their goals was local organization. At the same time their leaders, such as the Abbé Morellet in Paris, the Abbé Chatizel in Angers, and the Abbés Guilbert and Grégoire in Nancy, moved toward increasing cooperation with the third estate. In their practical struggles for representation and in their need for allies against the higher clergy, they increasingly expressed the idea that they were citizens first, and only secondly, priests. Although they did not follow the Abbé Sieyès in his complete adoption of the viewpoint of the third estate, the curés who defined their views during this period tended to mingle the goals of the third with their own. They anticipated that at the meeting of the States-General the lower clergy and the third would combine to reform the

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1. Guilbert, Conduite des curés, pp. 22-23 (Jérôme, op. cit., pp. 18-19).

clerical order at the same time that they reformed the entire nation. They would suppress privilege both in the nation and the clerical order. Chatizel, Guilbert, and Grégoire were convinced, it appears, that reform in the direction of equality was in accord with the law of Christ and that it was their duty as citizens to work for it. At the same time, there is some indication in the pamphlet literature that some members of the third estate were beginning to welcome the cooperation of the lower clergy in the attack on privilege.

However, in this period, certain fundamental problems persisted for the men of the lower clergy. Should they in fact follow their radical leadership and give their allegiance primarily to the third estate? Should they indeed consider themselves citizens first or clergymen first? Did the increased attacks by law writers of the third estate on ecclesiastical property not indicate the intention of some of the men of the commons to despoil the Church of her great wealth? The question of Church property, as the Abbé Morellet saw so clearly in retrospect, was a fundamental one for all the clergy, including the most patriotic of curés, those most disposed to the cause of the third estate. Unless a member of the clergy was willing to abandon all pretext to his priestly rôle and adopt the cause of the third, the decision as to what attitude to adopt in the face of continued threats to the Church's wealth would be a thorny one.

Chapter VI

THE ELECTION OF THE STATES-GENERAL FEBRUARY-APRIL 1789

In the months of February and March 1789 the militant lower clergy girded themselves for the coming battle with the dominant minority in the hierarchy, the prelates and their allies amongst the other ecclesiastics above the curé level. The lower clergy attempted to exploit in the election of delegates their superiority of numbers in the preliminary assemblies of the clergy that Necker's liberal electoral procedures had provided.

The curés were gaining support for their cause in divers regions of France. In Angers, for instance, where the situation has been studied so competently by Professor McManners,[1] elements within both the third estate and the regular clergy paid court to the curés and their vicaires. It was, however, too late in the day for the monkish clerics to pose with any effect as friends

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1. McManners, op. cit., pp. 220 ff.

of the lower clergy. For the third estate, already a near-relation to the curés, had sometime earlier appeared at the parish gate to fill the place both of friend and political ally to the men of the lower clergy. In March 1789 one lay writer voiced the sentiment of alliance between the two when he urged that "[we] unite our forces to counterbalance the power which the nobility and higher clergy have massed so effectively against our common interests." With an eye on the coming elections, he continues: "Dear pastors, will you be so weak as to bow before rank and birth? Can your votes be won or wrung from you by the imposing glance of your presiding bishop or by his brand-new air of affability?"[1] From Angers came the voice of another writer, Volney, who stated that the parish priests were the only useful members of their order in France.[2] Still another lay pamphleteer of the region, remembering perhaps Turgot's utilization of the curés for relief work,[3] argued that the distribution of charity in the town

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1. Lettre circulaire de quelques membres du tiers-état d'Anjou à MM. les les curés du diocèse convoqués pour l'assemblée du 16 mars, pp. 3-4, 8, quoted in McManners, op. cit., pp. 22-221.

2. A. Le Moy, Cahiers de doléances des corporations de la ville d'Angers et des paroisses de la sénéchausée particulière d'Angers pour les Etats-Généraux de 1789 (Angers, 1916), Vol. I.

3. Cf. Chapter I, p. 24.

of Angers should be re-organized in collaboration with the curés and to the exclusion of "any ecclesiastic who does not bear the title of curé."[1]

Meanwhile, however, criticisms of the clerical order as a whole and of specific conditions within it continued unabated in the writings of non-ecclesiastics in the period February-April 1789.[2] The general criticisms were embodied in three demands: first, that the clergy should not be accorded places in the States-General as representatives of a separate order in the State; second, that the tax privileges of the Catholic Church be

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1. Bureau Général de Charité: porro unum est necessairium, quoted in McManners, op. cit., p. 220.

2. Several hundred pamphlets were read for this period comprising the entire holdings of the Bibliothèque Nationale, the Bibliothèque Historique de la Ville de Paris, the Bibliothèque de la Société de Port-Royal, the British Museum Collection (Croker Collection), the collection of pamphlets in Duke University, and the limited holdings of pamphlets in the Archives Nationales. The most important of the pamphlets of the laity concerning religious matters are described in the Bibliography. Cf. also the general study by Boyd C. Shafer, "Quelques jugements de pamphlétaires sur le clergé à la veille de la Révolution," Annales historiques de la Revolution française, Vol. XVI (1939), pp. 110-122. Shafer considers the pamphlets as "vulgarizations of the doctrines of the philosophes." He concludes that his study showed that "the esprit national et bourgeois had triumphed over the authority and traditional prestige of the clergy. The Church was considered definitely subordinate to the Nation-State and not as forming a State within a State. Its riches and resources were to be placed--in one way or the other-- at the disposition of the country because the country was in a desperate financial situation and needed supplementary income; also because it was firmly believed that in this way the taxes that were crushing the non-privileged classes could be lightened." (p. 121).

renounced, a concession that the curés and prelates of the patriot group would have doubtless conceded; and, third, that Church property be confiscated.

The arguments against the recognition of the clergy as a separate order in the French state appeared to have no possibility of success after the Règlement du Roi of 24 January 1789 which established voting machinery and continued the historical tradition of the clergy's separate rank, nor is there any evidence that this idea was entertained by more than a few arch-opponents of the clergy. Nevertheless, these few critics often possessed a gift for logic and fine distinctions in thought, and their arguments reveal lay attitudes not easily found elsewhere in the pamphlet literature. Two pamphlets in particular deserve consideration: Des droits du clergé dans les affairs publiques and Chacun son mot ou idées sur l'ordre du clergé dans l'Assemblée Nationale des États-Généraux.

The first was the product of a legal-minded thinker who recognized but two orders in the French nation--"les grands et le peuple." He admits that it is difficult to define the word order (ordre) in the administrative sense, and yet this term is frequently employed when discussing the clergy and its position in the State. The word, he states, seems to have been applied to the three different sections of the States-General--nobility, commons, and clergy--rather by reason of the place which each

occupied in the meetings than for their particular constitution or for the _ensemble_ of principal conditions that should go into the formation of a branch of the administration. He argues that notwithstanding the definition which has been traditionally given this word and which leads us to understand it as signifying a separate class of the National Assembly and a distinct part of the _corps politique_, he can show that the clergy can never be considered such an independent element within the State.

Members of the clergy, he affirms, belonged first to the order of their fathers and, by extension, still belong to it. Drawn from diverse segments of society, the persons who compose the clergy have embraced the ecclesiastical state either through impulsion of the vocation, through considerations of possible fortune, through the feeling of weakness in the organs, or by fear of little aptitude for any other profession. Before they succumbed to these 'powerful' considerations, they all belonged to the order to which their fathers were attached.[1] Now, he continues, merely because these persons have abandoned the interests of the group into which they were born and rushed into a profession where divers motives--all foreign to _la chose publique_

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1. _Des droits du clergé dans les affaires publiques; papier trouvé sous les arcades du Palais Royal_ [S.l.n.d. Pp. 30], pp. 5-7.

--led them, should they be considered a political body, should they be considered a necessary order, the first in the State, and a constituent part of the States-General, one that by its consent can determine important changes in our constitution or by its refusal set up an invincible obstacle? Right reason, he states, cannot admit this as a possibility.[1]

Nor does the clergy satisfy the very first conditions imposed upon a class of society to qualify as an order. These conditions are that the class demonstrate a real interest both in obtaining a good constitution and administration for the realm and in continuing the prosperity and glory of the State. The clergy demonstrate neither of these.

One of the primary duties of a minister of religion, continues our critic, is the maintenance of the principles and dogmas of the Church against foreign and noxious influences. The total renunciation of all other interests except that of heaven is the first duty imposed upon an ecclesiastic by his religion. The abnegation of patriotism is thus, or should be, a fundamental principle amongst the clergy. The class of priests must exercise no civil or political rôle: their place is at the altar or in the confession-box. In violation of this, however,

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1. Ibid., pp. 7-8.

we observe the clergy engage in various political activities in the assemblies of their nation; and by virtue of this abandonment of their priestly duties they are regarded as an order in the political corps. Yet, although the men of the clergy participate in the nation's political decisions, the national assemblies themselves can decide no matters touching upon religious questions: the churchmen recognize uniquely their own decisions in such matters--as pronounced in their synods, councils, and assemblies--and the nation must submit to them in blind obedience.[1]

To justify the clergy's position in the State, says the author, we often hear the argument that the members of the first estate are numerous enough to carry out both religious and administrative functions. In answer, we reply that the nation maintains the clergy only that they may minister to the altars; it is for this explicit purpose that it has given them its properties. Moreover, the right to supervise the enormous wealth of the Church belongs to the nation alone and not to the clergy, even in its assemblies. The nation's right of supervision replaces that of the donors. The nation is supreme owner of the Church's properties and possesses the right either to approve or to reject any changes in the status of this property that the public interest deems desirable. The clergy enjoy merely the

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1. Ibid., pp. 8-9, passim.

usufruct of their wealth.[1]

Expressing ideas that anticipate the religious settlement of the National Assembly, the author continues his line of reasoning to disprove the clergy's claim to a position as a separate order. In this connection, he writes that the tithes, so long regarded as of divine origin because of the dominance in France of clerical ideas, are to-day recognized as human institutions. The State possesses the right to abolish the tithes if it wishes. Again, concerning clerical property, the clergy as usufructuaries enjoy their wealth only in the proportion that pleases the Prince. The clergy are salaried by the nation[2] and can do nothing, for example, to regulate the amount they receive. The nation can at its discretion increase or diminish the salaries of the clergy, or regulate the number of ecclesiastical posts at any one time. Yet this same clergy wish to style themselves an order in the State, the first branch of the administration, with the right to participate in the vital decisions of the empire.[3]

To attempt to dissuade us from the findings of right reason, the clergy will trundle out great piles of charters and

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1. Ibid., p. 11.

2. Ibid., pp. 12-14, passim. The phrase concerning the clergy's being salaried is: "les prêtres qu'elle [la nation] salaire." (p. 13).

3. Ibid., p. 14.

titles to prove the correctness of their historical place as a privileged order in the administration of the State. They will claim the sacred right of property. Yet we all know how the priests acquired their property, how they made themselves rich. In converting the nation in times past they horrified our forefathers with the terrors of Hell, applauding at the same time the buying of Heaven through sacrifices offered to the ministers of the altar. In such a way they obtained their position and made themselves our masters.[1]

The author is unwilling to examine in great detail the clergy's theoretical claim to property rights. He states, however, that it would be a simple matter to demonstrate that the clergy possess no property and that their wealth is at the disposition of the nation. The clergy, he claims, seek to find common cause with the other orders by terrifying them with examples of the threats made against secular property and by holding up the common danger which they declare menaces the property of all groups of society.[2]

Introducing a broader line of discussion, the writer expands his arguments to show that the entire course of events

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1. Ibid., p. 16.

2. Ibid., p. 19.

is running counter to the clergy's pretensions. In recent years, for instance, the clergy have been prevailed upon to relinquish such prerogatives as the right to judge and depose kings or to name their successors. Furthermore, the clergy have lost their superior jurisdiction on the tribunals of the land, have been forced to recognize the appels comme d'abus, and have withdrawn their pretension to total immunity from the paying of any tax monies to the State.[1]

Only in public ceremonies can the clergy pretend to precedence over other citizens, not in the National Assembly. For the clergy must devote themselves solely to spiritual matters. Outside the pulpit, they must display their evangelical virtues alone. The conservation of religion, he writes, and the maintenance of the cult should consume all the time of our ministers. The clergy may participate in the National Assembly but either as nobility or commons, not as clergy. The second and third estates--these two orders of citizens whose particular interests are sometimes distinct but never foreign the one from the other --will concert together for the public interest. Their happiness will be born of their harmony, and the sovereign, cloaked in the executive power by national consent and dominating their discussions, will become their common bond.[2]

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1. Ibid., pp. 20-21. 2. Ibid., pp. 27-30.

Voltaire had been perhaps the most notable of previous writers to question the position of the French clergy as a separate order within the State. And a line of influence which appears rather direct may be drawn from the writings of the Sage of Ferney to critical works like Chacun son mot, ou idées sur l'ordre du clergé dans l'Assemblée Nationale des Etats-Généraux, published in the period from January to March 1789 and the product of a lay writer, probably of the third estate. Upon the title page is found the Voltairean statement which will be the theme for the essay: "Il est essentiel de faire sur les Etats-Généraux de France un remarque que nos historiens auraient dû faire, c'est que la France est le seul pays du monde ou le clergé fasse un ordre de l'Etat."

Many of the critical judgements passed by the author upon the clergy were sufficiently common to be described as constituting basic elements of that climate of criticism that prevailed in the pamphlet press of the day. For example, the authors question: "Why should the clergy, whose functions should bear relation only to things of the 'other' world, exercise such a prodigious influence upon things of the temporal realm?" And again: "Why should they form among us a legal order, like a nation within a nation?" Let this army of priests and monks, numbering some 150,000 and possessing one-fifth of the kingdom's revenues make their laws in oecumenical councils--there they are in their

place (and fortunate still to be permitted to have one). In these meetings devoted to spiritual matters, they can arrive at decisions.

In a fashion typical of an enlightened, skeptical writer, the author displays a healthy contempt for the historical tradition underpinning the clergy's position. Let the archives of the kingdom be searched, he commands, and I defy anyone to find therein respectable titles defining the clergy's right to place into the balanced scales of the nation, held in the sovereign's hands, weights which would determine the course of governmental policy. Furthermore, if we peruse a valid history, written by one whose quill has not been guided by fanatical ignorance, we shall observe that the clergy have often played a ridiculous and sometimes odious rôle, beginning at the time when they were admitted into the councils of the State as a separate order in the National Assembly.

With respect to the place of the priests in society and the nature of their work therein, the author defines the profession of the ecclesiastic as but another of the basic occupations. The priest performs a job just as does the farmer, the magistrate, or the merchant. The difference is, however, that the clergy's functions are too often useless to society. Whereas the magistrate watches over our well-being and the farmer raises essential foods, the typical monk does nothing of real use.

To illustrate the illogical ascendancy of the clergy in society, a Voltairean image is conjured up: Let us imagine, he says, the trip of a Chinese to France. Curious to learn of the West, the oriental has voyaged from Peking to Paris. Here he is introduced to that hard corps of idle abbés and monks who fill the capital city. He observes with astonishment and indignation the manner in which they live, squandering the products of that fortune which the foolishness of our fathers has left them. And to cap it all, he is quite dumbfounded when told that these useless benefice-holders form in the nation a distinct order--the first order of the State.[1]

However, most lay writers of this period from February to April, 1789 were concerned not so much with the legal recognition of the clergy as an order as with the clergy's property and the privileged tax-free status of the group. The demands put forward in this period required either a considerable reduction of Church wealth or complete confiscation, although the latter view was that of only a minority of the writers. The subjection of the clergy to regular, fixed taxes on a basis equal to that of the other orders--a concession already granted by many curé authors--was also demanded by the third estate and its spokesmen.

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1. Ibid., p. 12.

An interesting pamphlet containing all the criticisms and demands of the laity was entitled Injustice des prétentions du clergé et de la noblesse. Expressing an attitude somewhat typical of the more severe critics of the clergy, the author argues against clerical exemption from taxation on the grounds that the Bible provides no foundation for such pretensions. Nor did Christ establish any distinction of rank between his disciples upon which the modern hierarchy of the Church can be justified. In support of a revival of primitive forms, he argues that: "The successors of the apostles have ceased to be Christian because they have abjured the primitive laws of Christianity."[1] Ecclesiastics have forgotten [despite centuries of ceaseless reminders, it seems] that God has told them to render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's, and that their kingdom is not of this world. It is time for the nation assembled to recall them to their primitive duties and subject them to the laws of this kingdom, to the charges and impositions of the nation of which they are a part--however much they claim to be distinct and independent of the government.[2]

The clergy claim to be the first order in the State.

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1. Injustice des prétentions du clergé et de la noblesse [S.l., 1789. Pp. 29], p. 2.

2. Ibid., p. 4.

Such a claim is an error and emanates from their abandonment of the laws of Christianity. Since their functions are uniquely spiritual, the temporal is forbidden to them. In the National Assembly mundane affairs will be treated, and the clergy may not sit in its meetings without being disobedient to that law which requires them to renounce the affairs of this world and follow Jesus Christ.[1]

At present, he writes, the sum of all the revenues of the clergy of France equals one-half the territorial income from all the properties of the kingdom.[2] The needs of the State, the public clamour against the abuses of the wealth, and the irregular morals of the clergy make it necessary to remake the clergy in the primitive image. The uselessness and indiscipline of the monks, for example, invite the suppression of all religious orders. To accomplish a reform of the clergy it is essential to sell and put into circulation all the properties of the clergy. The wealth resulting from the sale of Church lands will greatly enrich the State. The clergy will benefit, too, for they will become citizens attached to the State, yielding up in the process their separate identity as a body within the State. All

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1. Ibid., p. 4.

2. Ibid., p. 9; Shafer, op. cit., p. 118, note 9, notes that the estimates in the pamphlet press of the extent of Church property ranged from one-fifth to one-half of all the soil of France.

ecclesiastics will be appointed by the State and will receive salaries corresponding to those published in the Royal Almanach. Displaying a certain generosity, he would award the Archbishop of Paris 200,000 livres, the Archbishop of Lyons, 50,000; curés, as the most useful element, would receive salaries ranging from 6000 (largest towns) to 1000 livres (villages). In addition, the tithes would be done away with. The number of ecclesiastical offices would be reduced and certain posts, such as priorships and other lesser benefices, would be abolished.

Going beyond the general issues of tax-exemption, the disposition of Church property, and the legal existence of the clergy as an order, some lay writers also outlined specific criticisms of the clergy and outlined particular reforms designed to restore the vitality of the Church and strengthen its ancient structure. These specific criticisms and reform proposals tended to focus on certain standard issues, which re-appear again and again in the pamphlets and were sketched by one bishop in the following statement:

> The innumerable brochures that appeared toward the end of 1788 and the early part of 1789 were unanimous, one can say, in denouncing the insufficiency of the portions congrues, the excessive opulence of the bishops, the scandalous luxury of the abbots, the abuse of the plurality

> of offices, absenteeism among the bishops, the multiplication of religious orders, and the vicious education given in the seminaries.[1]

Many of the issues mentioned above, as well as some additions, are contained in the pamphlet Hommage à l'humanité. In this work, however, the emphasis is clearly placed upon the evils within the episcopacy and the need for an equitable distribution of Church wealth. Composed in the months preceding the meeting of the States-General in May 1789, this lay pamphlet argues that Church wealth should be held in common by all the clergy since all their needs are the same. The rights of the bishops to dominate the clergy, writes the critic, are not valid, but are usurped. In particular, he opposes the interference by bishops in temporal affairs because he believes such acts are purely to gain political power, and hence to increase their wealth. Then, equating simplicity with purity and devotion, he maintains that: "It is in vain that one should seek elsewhere than in the great ostentation of the bishops and other important tithe-collectors the causes of the evils that have befallen the Church." From the hubris of the bishops, from their excessive love of ostenta-

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1. Quoted by Jean Wallon, Le clergé de 89: le pape-le roi-la nation; fin de l'ancien régime (Paris, 1876), p. 179: Wallon cites the pamphlet Sentiment d'un évêque sur les réformes à introduire dans le clergé [S.l.n.d.], as his source. An examination of this work, however, reveals that it is not the source from which he quoted.

tion and their concern for the temporal world stem so many of the abuses within the hierarchy.

By contrast, it is to the country clergy that we must look for inspiration and example:

> Rural pastors, dear citizens of the people, friends of suffering humanity, who frequent, in the exercise of your ministry, those obscure recesses where misery exercises its ravages and its cruelest dominion, you remain as the only ones to instruct your idle and dissipated chiefs in the capitol. . . . you alone visit the poor and suffering of the kingdom. And how you must be ashamed when you see the contrasting spectacle of the luxurious episcopal houses.[1]

Yet these clerics, who provide in their lives such an inspiring contrast to the outrageous display and ostentation of the bishops, these same rural curés are consumed with distress through their miserable lot. The government must ameliorate their plight, increase their portion congrue. As for this term itself, "congrue," in principle, signifies sufficient. In effect, these portions congrues were sufficient at their institution for the honest maintenance of the pastors. But they are no longer sufficient, and the name itself, which they still retain, is a ridiculous and insulting appellation. We must pay higher stipends for curés and lower ones for prelates, eliminate multiple benefices, abolish hereditary bishoprics, reform the monastic houses, and enforce the requirement of residence for bishops.

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1. Hommage à l'humanité [S.l., 1789. Pp. 53]., pp. 22-23.

In the presence of the incisive censure passed upon the clergy in works such as the pamphlets Chacun son mot or Injustice des prétentions du clergé, and indeed of the continuing climate of criticism against ecclesiastics in France, the opinions expressed by the men of the first estate evolved gradually from January to April 1789. Perhaps the most elusive attitude to delineate and comprehend, yet the best documented, is that voiced by members of the lower clergy in this period. The lower clergy confronted four interlocking problems. The most immediate problem was the need to win in the coming elections an adequate representation in the States General. This necessity preoccupied their most active curé leaders, such as Jallet, Grégoire, and Chatizel. The second difficulty was the opposition of the higher clergy to the aims of the curés, an opposition rooted in the traditional hostility between upper and lower clergy that was in part the heritage of the theological disputes and in part the result of the increased stratification of society and hierarchy in France. Thirdly, the associated issues of Church finances, property, and tax privileges could not be ignored by thinking ecclesiastics of whatever rank. And last, for the curés, there was the thorny question of double loyalties: the lower clergy owed allegiance on the one hand to the first estate as clerics and, on the other, to the State as citizens and functionaries of the royal administration.

In a work such as the pamphlet Lettre d'un curé de Picardie à un évêque, dated 10 February 1789 but written before the Règlement of 24 January was known to the author, we see an early example of a clerical writer confronted with these basic problems. Because it was composed before knowledge of the Règlement, however, the work defines as one of its goals the admittance of the curés of the diocese of Reims to the States-General and to the assemblies of the clergy. After the news of the king's decree had circulated, the principle of curé representation became an established one and the topic of debate switched to considerations of the extent to which the curés could win proportionate representation by electing delegates to the States-General.

In the main, the Lettre d'un curé is a standard pamphlet making standard demands, viz. increase in the portion congrue, participation in the States, abolition of the casuel, etc. With respect to the problem of Church finances, moreover, the author is responding not to the attacks on Church property but to the more specific criticism of the tax-free status of the clergy. And although the author's opinion favoring the clergy's assumption of an equal share of the tax burden is typical, the arguments that he develops to support it represent a curious blend of disparate elements. Thus we find him citing Turgot in a lucid statement of enlightenment doctrine emphasizing the need to base

all action on right reason: "Les droits des hommes réunis en société ne sont point fondés sur leur histoire, mais sur leur nature. Il ne peut y avoir de raisons de perpétuer les établissemens fait sans raison."[1] It has proved a severe imposition upon the nation to abandon to a "numerous and rich class of citizens" the imposition of taxes. Consequently the king has returned to the nation the right to levy taxes; and it is for the nation assembled to decide the question of the immunity of the clergy, as well as that of all other corps.

For this clerical writer the question of loyalty is squarely posed by the vexing problem of Church finances. Yet his position on the matter is clear:

> I write as a friend of my compatriots and, more particularly, as a friend of my State. To write otherwise would be not to serve it but to betray it cruelly. For what could the State's position be toward a corps which, by virtue of whatever title, claimed the least degree of independence from its authority? The State could not conserve the offending part within its bosom.[2]

He continues, it is because he is a curé that he writes this work. "Why relinquish to our enemies," he queries, "the triumph of forcing us [to condede what is just]?" On the basis of

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1. Lettre d'un curé de Picardie à un évêque sur le droit des curés d'assister aux assemblées du clergé et aux Etats-Généraux, et sur quelques objets intéressants qui y sont relatifs [S.l., 10 février 1789, Pp. 34], p. 3.

2. Ibid., p. 6.

principles of incontestable truth drawn from the Evangile and interpreted by right reason, it appears that as far as temporal matters are concerned the clergy are subject to the State. Then, with a solemn touch, he comments: "God has not blessed the temporal pretensions of the clergy."[1]

In the same vein but within the context of thoughts on the place of the curé in society, the author makes the significant comment:

> One is not a curé without voluntary and frequent sacrifices. He who can make them for his parish can but do likewise for the State. No one is more a citizen than a curé. We have always been persuaded that there are but two sorts of subjects in the State; and that if the ecclesiastic can be distinguished from the layman, it is only by his greater fidelity and obedience.[2]

With reference to the periodic contribution of the don gratuit in lieu of payment of taxes, he declares that if the clergy continue to act apart in this manner, the people will never be satisfied. They shall always remain convinced that the clergy do not pay a sufficient portion of the taxes. While this would be a false notion, it nevertheless should not be lent any credence by continuation of the present system. The wife of Caesar must be above suspicion. If the curés do not pay taxes, the people shall always find reason to complain. "Citizens like

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1. Ibid.

2. Ibid., p. 12. The italics were inserted by me.

everyone else," he declares, "we think it appropriate that the nation assembled render justice to all--without distinction of condition or rank."[1] Even when the clergy have renounced all temporal administration there will still remain plenty of work to be done, and work of the only type which suits their position.

In his discussion of the bishops, the author is conciliatory. He places the emphasis upon the unity of the higher and lower clergy, stressing the point that the curés do not form a separate corps with the clergy but are united with the bishops in one common group.[2] He is encouraged, he says, by the proposals of a few bishops for proportionate taxation, but regrets that they are so few in number. It is apparent from the highly cautious and moderate tone of the clerical writer that he is unaware that the curés had been granted equal voting rights with the bishops in the electoral assemblies.

Familiar themes appear in his remarks protesting against the injustice of the plight of the curés, against the dissipation of the tithes usurped by "foreign hands," and against the enormous profanation of ecclesiastical wealth. The Church is not the clergy alone, he writes, it is all the society of the faithful.

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1. Ibid., pp. 21-22.

2. Ibid., p. 23.

And the poor have no share in the clergy's wealth because the monks and divers benefice-holders control it. It is not tears that the nation asks of the clergy but bread for the poor. Doubtless the States-General will concern itself first with the debt of the State and the means to reduce it. But surely if the representatives of the nation continue their deliberations as the king has promised and if they meet but twice, they will concern themselves with the problem of relief for the several millions of poor. Our great king, Louis le Restaurateur, in his wisdom has already given the nation an example of sacrifice. The nobility have declared their intention to imitate the king and his household. The clergy shall not be the last to follow in his footsteps.[1]

By January 1789, many curés throughout the French kingdom were following with interest the developments related to the lower clergy in regions like Dauphiné and Brittany. Through references in pamphlets such as the Lettre d'un curé, we see that the lower clergy were particularly cognizant of the gains in representation won by their colleagues in the above-mentioned areas.[2] At Orléans, a group of curés assembled periodically at the residence of their dean during the period 2-28 January to acquaint

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1. Ibid., pp. 29-31, passim.

2. See Ibid., p. 17: "Déjà le Dauphiné, la Bretagne et d'autres provinces ont senti la nécessité d'admettre les curés dans leurs Etats. . . ."

themselves with the divers writings that had come in from other dioceses and to draw up matters for discussion which were raised by these communiqués. On the 28 January after discussion, the curés heard and approved the report of a committee appointed to present their position on questions of common concern.[1] In addition, they ordered the report to be printed and it bore the title: Extrait des délibérations et arrêté des curés d'Orléans, relativement à la convocation des États-Généraux. With respect to their own fiscal plight, the curés set down conventional complaints and suggestions to improve their lot. As for concrete suggestions as to the sources of the funds to provide for their increased incomes, the curés have none. They merely state that the States-General possesses the power to reform the inequalities within the hierarchy and that the Church is rich enough to provide abundantly for the honest subsistence of all the essential ministers of religion.

With reference to the higher clergy, the curés have no barbs to extract. In the broad context of a general statement of denunciation of the "illegal formation of the bureaux of the tithes", containing as they do too few curés and too many divers

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1. Extrait des déliberations et arrêté des curés d'Orléans, relativement à la convocation des Etats-Généraux [S.l.n.d. (28 janvier). Pp. 23], p. 1.

clerics of a non-essential variety, the authors stress that there exists no intermediary class of ecclesiastics between the episcopacy and the pastoral corps, and hence any Church body must contain but these latter two elements. Indeed, they write, the bishops and curés form to-day, as in all times, one unique body of pastors. This body of pastors is divided into two orders, of which the first, containing the bishops, is superior to the second; and these two orders permit no other between them.[1]

On the question of Church finances and, more specifically, the matter of tax immunity, the curés of Orléans show their true colors. Through their support of the third estate on this matter and their arguments in justification of it, they make apparent their view of the problem of divided allegiances. The curés, they write, will renounce these "vain immunities" when the circumstances, the times, and the general wishes of the nation seem to require this sacrifice. Then in a covert allusion, they declare their main fear to be that they will be forestalled by "some other class of the clergy" in this honorable démarche. In a meaningful statement of policy, they then state:

> Let us protest solemnly before the nation that each time that it is a question of public expenses, we do not wish our interests to be separated from those of the people because

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1. Extrait des déliberations et arrêté des curés d'Orléans, p. 8.

> we are devoted subjects, and we are citizens before we are priests. By such a frank démarche, we shall succeed in interesting the nation in our cause. Furthermore, we should not lose sight for a single instant of this decisive circumstance: that it is solely in the nation, assembled in the States-General, that we must place our hopes; that is from the nation alone that we must await our regeneration and the reform of the injustices which have so often excited our useless complaints.[1]

The curés declare that the handwriting of the future is carved for all to read above the façade of the Old Régime: the nation will soon recapture its rights despite the resistance of those persons whose personal interest would prevent it and despite those who declare that all is well in the nation because they desire nothing more than their present lot. The imminent innovations should not surprise us, they write. Nor is it for us to share in the alarums; far from being fatal to us, a new order of things would result in a just amelioration of our position, because public opinion is on our side.[2]

Their plan is clear:

> Let us thus favor as much as possible the cause of the people; let us show ourselves to be the most zealous defenders of the interests of the third estate; let us join our cause to theirs, our claims to their just demands. In so doing, we shall find in them both generous protectors and useful patrons.[3]

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1. Ibid., pp. 19-20.
2. Ibid., p. 20.
3. Ibid., pp. 20-21.

In accord with this plan, the curés join their voices to those of the municipalities of the kingdom to welcome the decision of 27 December doubling the representation of the third. Moreover, they duly express their most sincere hopes that the elections of the deputies to the States-General will take place in common with the three orders united and that in the States-General the deliberations will be made in common and the voting will be by head.

Written as they were in the anxious period before the king's electoral decree was known, the curé pamphlets Lettre d'un curé and the Extrait reflected the preoccupation of the lower clergy in this period with the principle of representation and with the corollary necessity of obtaining a voice in the clergy's choice of delegates for the States-General. After the decree of 24 January, which granted the curés equality of voting with bishops in the electoral assemblies for the States-General, the patriot lower clergy were involved in a struggle with the conservative elements within the prelacy to dominate the assemblies and to assure the election of curés as delegates from the divers bailiwicks. In some areas where they were tightly organized, their efforts were highly effective; and, in the main, they accomplished their goal. Yet after January 24, as before, the leaders of the curé movement and those reformist curés most active in writing of ecclesiastical affairs, absorbed in the day-

to-day struggle with the prelates and canons in their districts, appear to have been unconscious of the peril which threatened their order. As we have seen earlier,[1] the opinion of lay pamphlet writers insisted almost universally on a considerable reduction of the Church's wealth, the complete confiscation thereof, or, at the least, the subjection of the clergy to regular, fixed taxes on a basis equal to that of the other orders. Yet the articulate members of the lower clergy, in their reaction to criticism of Church finances, show a concern not with the extremist threat of confiscation, but with the milder--if more general--demand for renunciation of tax privileges. In their failure to recognize the inherent danger in the threats of confiscation and the possible ramifications of such action--no one could predict the consequences of confiscation despite the assurances of the most radical writers that there would be some compensation--the patriot curés neglected the essential divergence of interest between first and third estates.

There appears, moreover, to be a serious contradiction within the thinking of articulate curés at this epoch. With the roots of their confidence and inspiration embedded firmly in the popularized doctrines of Edmond Richer exalting the position of curés as successors of the seventy-two disciples and thus

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1. See above p. 212 .

establishing that the curés hold office by divine, and not by human, institution (as opposed to the canons, priors, and monks), the men of the lower clergy approached their superiors in the hierarchy with a program of reform designed to restore their 'rightful' place as subordinates only to the bishops in the administration of the Gallican Church. As we have stated in an earlier chapter, the Jansenist-Richerist heritage, as modified by G. N. Maultrot and popularized by Henri Reymond,[1] thus provided the foundation of conviction, if not the immediate inspiration, for the arguments of the reformist curés. Yet there emerged in reaction to the decades-long criticism of the clergy by the philosophes and their followers a corollary to the Richerist doctrine that stressed the utilitarian nature of the curés' functions, the practical rôle of the priest as a combination social-worker, moralist, and royal agent for charitable and administrative functions. And as the sharp conflict between privileged orders and ministry developed in the period after July 1788 and continued in 1789, the tension inherent in the dual position was resolved by some through a declaration of alliance with the resurgent third estate and an expression of reliance upon the king and the third estate to carry through general and

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1. See Chap. I, p.30ff .

clerical reform in the States-General. The process can be followed in such statements as that of the curés of Orléans which stressed that the curés consider themselves citizens first, priests second. In works like this, the lower clergy seek to convince the nation of the basic identification of interests between lower clergy and third estate with both joining against the mutual enemy of aristocratic domination. "We are in the clergy," they thus write "what the third estate is in the nation."[1] Yet what gives rise to the contradiction is the failure of the patriot clergy to consider the impossibility of reconciling the extremist views of the third estate concerning Church property and the rôle of the clergy, with their own. For as seen repeatedly throughout this paper, a common theme running through the extremist pamphlets of the third estate is the necessity to render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's. What is meant by this statement is very clearly the necessity that the clergy withdraw from their involvement in temporal affairs. To the extremist writer, this means withdrawal of both higher and lower clergy, although the sharpest goads are, of course, reserved for the mitered-heads. If the argument for non-involvement is extended, as it was by the severest critics of the clergy, the men

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1. [Chatizel], Projet d'un mémoire. . . [S.l.n.d. Pp. 19], p. 13.

of the first estate would be stripped of their properties, deprived of their independent position as the first of the three orders, and restricted primarily to spiritual duties as salaried employees of the State. That such reasoning lay in direct opposition to the curés' own arguments to justify the utility and necessity of their rôle as active Christian citizens, distributors of charity, and agents of royal beneficience seems evident. Yet the leaders and spokesmen of the lower clergy appear not to have been cognizant of this inherent incompatibility in goals; they seem, rather, to have listened to the divers local offers of alliance coming from the third estate, offers proffered with increasing frequency as the elections to the States-General approached. Perhaps, too, they harkened excessively to the round and friendly tones raised to them in the greater number of writings of the third and to the general praise sung therein for the curés' work with the indigent of the nation. In their preoccupation with the urgent need to win representation to the States-General and with their long and bitter subservience to a small group of bishops, abbots, and canons, the lower clergy failed to realize that their fate was tied to that of the vast properties of the Gallican Church and not to the simple renunciation of the tax privileges, a gesture which in itself stood to affect them little

at all.[1]

In his study of the reform ideas of the curés prior to the States-General Mr. M. G. Hutt offers the thesis that the curé pamphleteers were "above all else protesting against the undue wealth and influence of a minority of prelates, abbots, and canons." They were obsessed, he continues, with the problem of their own status within the Church, a status theoretically elevated in Richerist teaching. Within this context, the curés' vision of reform is seen as that of a purified and democratized Church with the lower clergy, better paid and eligible for promotion, providing the nucleus of a more vigorous ecclesiastical group that seeks to Christianize society first, and then, through this means, to promote justice and the well-being of the people. Hutt maintains therefore that it was this reformed clergy who were to effect the basic changes in society, not the legislative action of a secular assembly.[2] Also, he holds that the clerical

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1. That this latter point did not escape certain of the clergy is clearly established by statements like the following by the curés of Etampes in their manifesto. They wrote: "Nos privilèges! Ils n'existent que pour la classe supérieure. Ils sont injustes et abusifs. Loin de les reclamer nous les réprouvons comme n'ayant jamais dû exister, et nous en sollicitions l'entière abolition." Quoted from the Manifeste du 14 curés du bailliage d'Etampes [Paris, 1789], p. 15, by M. G. Hutt in "The Curés and the Third Estate: the Ideas of Reform in the Pamphlets of the French Lower Clergy in the Period 1787-1789", Journal of Ecclesiastical History, Vol. VIII (1957), p. 89, note 4.

2. Hutt, op. cit., pp. 86, 91.

and lay visions of the new order clashed. The third estate wished both equality of rights and liberty.[1] While the clergy advocated Christian equality, in their cahiers they refused to accept such manifest expressions of liberty as toleration for Protestants, freedom of press, and non-surveillance of public morals.[2] Hence, "fundamentally in their concepts of the ideal society churchmen and laity were at variance."[3]

Hutt's statement that the goals of "greater justice and well-being of the people" were to be realized through the "Christianizing of society by a purified and revivified Church, not by the legislative action of a secular assembly" appears to be a serious over-statement of the evidence offered by the pamphlets. To a great extent the curés were concerned with winning universal acceptance of their utility in society and with establishing the primacy of their rôle as citizens. Nor were they opposed to the carrying out of reforms by a secular-dominated

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1. Cf. Georges Lefebvre, Quatre-vingt-neuf (Paris, 1939), p. 83: "Pour le tiers-état l'égalité des droits [était] inséparable de la liberté."

2. Although the conclusions concerning the information in the clerical cahiers appear fundamental for Hutt's thesis, the only source given is the old study by A. Denys-Buirette, Les questions religieuses dans les cahiers de 1789 (Paris, 1919). Of equal, if not greater, value are the studies carried out more recently by Professor Beatrice Hyslop; see bibliography.

3. Hutt, op. cit., p. 91.

assembly under the tutelage of king and ministry. Otherwise, how can we explain the confidence voiced in the king and in the third estate that the clergy and the nation will be cleansed and reformed of the abuses within? The arguments of the curés typified not merely a projection of Richerist doctrines and abstract principles of the equality of man onto the surface of Church reform; they represented, in addition, a gradually evolving response on the practical level to changing conditions and opportunities for agitation and reform in co-operation with the third estate and the king in the States-General. Moreover, the positive concept of the curés' rôle as conceived by earlier critics of the Church such as Voltaire and Rousseau appears to have entered consciously or unconsciously into the curés' own view of their utilitarian functions in a new society. And it was on this plane that the curés' visionary world was threatened by the proposals of the extremists in the third estate. The danger to the lower clergy stemmed not from compatriots motivated by the secular concept of equality of rights and liberty but from those few men whose expressed goal was to seize Church property and undermine the entire position of the clergy in French society. The threat would be apparent to one who considered himself a man of the surplice engaged in a spiritual occupation. Such a priest would be sensitive to hostile attacks from enemies upon wealth that enabled him to function. However, the threat was not ap-

parent to a clergyman who thought of himself as a citizen first and only secondly as a priest, and as an ally of reform elements in the third estate. He had come to this conception of his position through a long evolution that involved the growing recognition of his utility in French society, the failure of his efforts to persuade his own order to reform itself and grant him recognition and better pay, and the opening of opportunity to secure triumphant reform at the States-General in alliance with the third estate. Thinking of himself as a citizen-ally of the third estate, he would simply not envisage a successful attack from that quarter on the Church's wealth.

These aspects of curé attitude and policy were apparent in two pamphlets written in February just prior to the elections to the States-General. The pamphlets also bear witness to the new spirit of confidence within the ranks of the lower clergy, now that it was known that the electoral procedures granted them a numerical superiority in the electoral assemblies of the first estate. An exhortation to the curés to unite in electing members of their own "class" as delegates to the assembly, the Lettre d'un curé à un de ses confrères warns of the great risk which the curés run if they comply with the wishes of their apostolic superiors in the matter. It would be a "veritable misfortune" if the too modest complaisance of the lower clergy were to swing the balance in the favor of the bishops. The

reasoning of the author is lucidly presented. In his view the functions of the curés have a double aspect: those of civil magistrate and those of a sacerdotal character. In difficult times, the French sovereign, recognizing their dual rôle, calls upon these enlightened pastors who, observing at first hand the needs of their subjects, are more competent than all others to give detailed knowledge of them and to indicate the remedies for their ills.[1]

Despite this special bond which exists between king and lower clergy, the corps of curés have for more than a century now been deprived of all public consideration. Lacking as they do the common necessities of life, they have fallen in the public esteem. We have decided, he writes, that to emerge from the oppressed state in which the curés have languished so long, that to merit the good opinion of the sovereign, the curés must choose men of their own number as their delegates to the next States-General. All other corporations in the State enjoy the right to assemble, to deliberate, to discuss, and to reform abuses--but not the curés. For the heads of the Church will not permit it. Moreover, any Mémoire or written tract which has for its object the defense of the faith, of discipline, of morals

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1. Lettre d'un curé à un de ses confrères, sur la nomination de leurs députés aux Etats-Généraux [S.l.n.d. Pp. 16], pp. 3-4.

and which has been redacted and subscribed to by a number of assembled curés--this work carries the cruel mark of reprobation, it is labeled an attack upon the laws of the kingdom, and is often suppressed as a most libelous and seditious work.[1]

Such is the situation to-day in France of oppression and opprobrium which surrounds men who are as much and even more citizens than other Frenchmen because amongst their principal duties is that of working ceaselessly to mould conduct by their examples and by their instructions.[2] Yet they cannot expect their interests to be represented by the higher clergy.

> Now I ask you, Messieurs, do you believe that if the first order of the clergy [prelates] dominate in the future assembly of the States-General and accord the second order [curés] the signal honor of concerning themselves with the curés' affairs, do you believe that they shall do so in the clear light of objectivity, of justice, and of concern which is merited by those who are their co-opérateurs?[3]

Although the lower clergy experience extreme vexation and frustration over fiscal matters like the "disproportionate assessment" of the décimes, the author solicits the curés earnestly not to make a great issue of this in their Doléances which are to be prepared for presentation at the electoral assemblies. Wise laws have been passed, he writes, to protect taxpayers from

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1. Ibid., p. 5.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid., p. 7.

injustices. If these laws are not executed to protect the interests of the curés as citizens, then it is the fault of the curés. For instance, when seats fall vacant on the Diocesan Bureaux that determine the distribution of the tax burden, no one prevents the curés from asking for justice in the choice of representatives.

> But to speak the truth, courage is lacking amongst some of you; fear dominates others; hope enslaves the greater number. Can you complain when those foreign to your interests fill the seats of the Bureaux when you have not exhausted legal recourse? Have the courage to demand the help of the laws![1]

An additional argument reinforces the above conclusions: Louis XVI desires that "equitable revolution" which will bring an end to the pecuniary privileges of the clergy. The curés must ally with the French monarch and his loyal subjects against the entrenched class of privileged persons. In renouncing their tax exemptions the clergy will thereby lighten the burden upon the people.

> The names of those who shall aid in this equitable revolution in concert with our beneficient monarch will be dear to posterity. How distressing it would be if the monuments that shall conserve the memory of the events of this period did not attest that at the moment when they took place the lower clergy lacked not in zeal, patriotism, or deference to the wishes of their sovereign. Among the proofs furthermore of the anticipated pleasure that the king takes in the prospect of a throne surrounded by pastors is the wise pre-

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1. Ibid., p. 8.

caution taken to insure that the voting is free from influence and that it is carried out in freedom.[1]

A second pamphlet of February 1789, Doléances du clergé du second ordre, is also hopeful. We have grounds for optimism, write the curé authors, from the prospect of a meeting of the States-General wherein the clergy will be represented without regard to distinctions of rank. We thus hope from this "new order of things" a reform of the abuses that have ruined ecclesiastical discipline. At last the curés can denounce for all the nation to hear those injustices that they have suffered so long. They feel secure in the knowledge that their voices will counterbalance those of the "hierarchical nobility" whose interest lies in maintaining the abuses.

Two orders, they continue, must be distinguished within the clergy: the nobility and the third estate.[2] The latter com-

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1. Ibid., pp. 14-15.

2. Talleyrand in his Mémoires makes a similar statement. He writes: "L'Etat, quoique divisé nominalement en trois ordres, ne l'était réellement qu'en deux classes: la classe noble et la classe plébéienne. Une partie du clergé appartenait à la première, et l'autre partie à la seconde de ces deux classes." Talleyrand, Mémoires; edited by Couchoud and Couchoud (Paris, 1957), Vol. I, p. 149.

prises the 42,000 curés of the kingdom. The former is nominally described as encompassing exclusively the bishops and abbots of the hierarchy; but because their interests have the same bases as those of the canons and monks--that is to say, all are equally enriched from the spoils of those true evangelical workers, the curés--there has been formed a union between them, a conspiracy to maintain themselves in their usurpations they call their 'rights'.[1]

That the nobility is viewed as the common foe of the king, the third estate, and the curés alike emerges clearly as the authors set forth their reasons to justify the natural union that exists between lower clergy and the third. "The curés and other lower clergy have this in common with the secular third estate," they write, "that they have been enslaved and despoiled by the nobles of their respective orders; that, historically, when the bishops and barons had crushed royal authority and shared it between them, the people and the lower clergy became the playthings of the ecclesiastical nobles and the military."[2] For history teaches that the lot of the lower clergy and the

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1. Doléances du clergé du second ordre [S.l.n.d. Pp. 32], pp. 3-4, passim. This definition of the higher clergy is found in other curé works. See, for example, Droit de représentation des curés à l'assemblée nationale [Nancy, 25 Janvier 1789, Pp. 3], p. 1.

2. Doléances du clergé du second ordre, p. 5.

people has always been more or less unhappy according as the authority of the crown was more or less limited by les grands, ecclesiastic or lay.

The curés direct the brunt of their criticism in this pamphlet not against the bishops specifically but against their class, the nobility. In a warning to the king, the curés contend that the nobles became truly odious only when they set as their goal the invasion of the patrimony of the altars. The present crisis, furthermore, should instruct the king in the type of preference that the aristocrats merit in his kingdom. "Their seditious insurrection against the orders of the sovereign proves that, however modern they are, they have inherited from former times the unbending spirit of pride and insubordination . . . ."[1] The present nobility continue in the tradition of those of their ancestors who swept away all power from the descendants of Clovis and reduced the French people to a condition of slavery after having crushed the might of the crown. Yet, happily, the people to-day are better informed of the rights of the throne as well as of their own--without which who knows into what paths the nobles would be led, blinded as they are by the furor to dominate. In all respects it is therefore to the best

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1. Ibid., p. 23.

interests of the king to unite firmly with his third estate, always faithful and submissive, to restrain the pretensions of an order that has already so harmed the State.[1]

Not all the curés' complaints concern the noble class in general. Ever heedful of their specific goals, they set forward a moderately phrased yet thoroughgoing reform of the system of episcopal domination of clerical affairs. To limit the absolute power of the bishops at the diocesan level and thus put an end to the "despotic government" which characterizes Church administration, the curés propose to re-institute the diocesan synods with representation therein confined to curés and bishops. It is hence their expressed hope that the king and the States-General will reform the diocesan administration to provide subdivisions, or arrondissements, comprising 30 parishes each. The curés in each of the arrondissements would meet and elect two deputies to the diocesan assembly which would be presided over by the bishop. Votes in the assemblies would be decided by a plurality of the deputies and decisions would stand until revoked by a future assembly. These assemblies would meet yearly and decide all important diocesan affairs.[2] Such a measure, if instituted, would of course fulfill the curé wish to return the

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1. Ibid., pp. 23-24, passim. 2. Ibid., pp. 25-26.

administration of diocesan affairs to the hands of the curés in co-operation with the presiding bishop.

The Clerical Elections to the States-General and Their Aftermath

As we have seen earlier, the electoral system for the first estate announced by Necker in the Règlement du roi of 24 January 1789 gave the curés of France a great numerical advantage over the regular clergy and the prelates in the electoral assemblies.[1] The advantage was made certain if all those curés who were eligible did attend the meetings. In view of the general ferment to which the pamphlet literature attests, it is understandable that some of the assemblies of the clergy were marred by stormy disputes. In the past the higher clergy had clearly dominated the elections. The clerical delegation of 1558, for instance, was composed only of bishops and archbishops; in the States-General of 1614, of 140 ecclesiastics, 59 were cardinals, archbishops, or bishops, not to mention vicars-general and abbots. In 1789, however, the lower clergy, fully represented, resisted the domination of the prelates. At Caudebec-en-Caux, the representative of the Archbishop, the Abbé de Pradt,

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1. See above Chapter V, pp. 195 , ff.

Vicar-general, was severely beaten.[1] At Lyons, there was such a bitter dispute between the curés, led by Charrier de la Roche, and the Vicars-general de Villers and Bonnard, that the latter were forced to leave the meeting accompanied by a shower of insolences.[2] The Bishop of Evreux, Narbonne-Larn, complained in a personal letter to Necker that the curés in his electoral meeting rejected every one of his proposals and that they did so "with the most marked contempt."[3] At Agen, the spirit of insubordination manifested itself in several acts of aggression.[4]

Some of the accounts of the elections by contemporary ecclesiastics are extant. One priest interpreted the conflicts as stemming in part from the patriotic zeal of the curés who as useful citizens had gathered primarily to promote the well-being of the nation and who found themselves in opposition to the idle clergy whose prime concern was for their own selfish interests. His account runs as follows:

> The members of the clergy gathered together as citizens, not as priests, and the electoral assemblies turned out to be tumultuous only because the bishops insisted on comporting themselves as if they were in a council, rather than in a national assembly. Scarcely had they met when the clergy

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1. Charles Ledré, L'église de France sous la révolution (Paris, 1949), p. 151

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

> found themselves naturally divided into two parts: the commendatory part, happy, rich, and without employment; and the working part, exposed to all the rigors of need. From this division sprang the fights and the factions which are born of accumulated abuses.[1]

The patriot Curé Jacques Jallet has left an account of the meeting of the primary electors of the Sénéchausée of Poitiers, convoked at Poitiers. Before the meeting, he accompanied several of his colleagues on a visit to the Bishop of Poitiers, Beaupoil de Saint-Aulaire. "He received us well," said the curé, "never had he been so honest. He assumed a satisfied air following some compliments that I paid him--so as to make him forget some rather raw words that I had addressed to him on another occasion."[2] This same bishop came to the electoral assembly, and finding neither a special chair nor any place prepared for him, was obliged to seat himself on the end of a bench next to a curé. "This so strongly humiliated him," added Jallet, "that he pulled out a book and began to read without concerning himself with the assembly; he left soon afterward. I do not know if he will return on the morrow. There are voices against him on all sides."[3]

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1. Quoted in Wallon, Le clergé de quatre-vingt-neuf: le pape-le roi-la nation; fin de l'ancien régime (Paris, 1876), p. 204.

2. Jacques Jallet, Journal inédit de Jallet (Fontenal-le-Comte, 1871), pp. 8-9.

3. Ibid., p. 9.

Jallet was nominated as a candidate for the States-General, but, by his own account, he resisted this nomination from conviction that the partisans of the bishops controlled the meeting and that, as a result, he had little chance for election. However, things changed and the 29 March 1789 he wrote: "I have just come back from the assembly; things have taken a different color; the bishops are totally abandoned and it will require considerable address for them to win out now."[1] Jallet was subsequently elected as the seventh deputy of the clergy of Poitou, along with his friends Le Cesve and Ballard. Of the seven deputies, the curés had five and the bishops two.

From the Bishops of Clermont and Amiens came protests against both the elections and the statements of the cahiers of their dioceses, protestations which echoed the controversies that reigned.[2] The latter prelate protested vigorously in an

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1. Letter of 29 March 1789, quoted in Jallet, op. cit., p. 9.

2. The electoral procedures of 24 January had provoked in certain quarters strong reactions which were continued and re-inforced by the activities at the electoral assemblies. See, for example, works such as Protestations du chapître de l'Eglise Cathédrale de Lavaur (signé: l'Evêque de Lavaur et quelques douzaines de chanoines) [S.l.n.d. Pp. 11]; Réponse au libelle calomnieux de quelques dignitaires et chanoines de l'Eglise Cathédrale de Tulles; par des curés députés à l'assemblée des Etats-Généraux [S.l.n.d. Pp. 16] (on title page of the copy in B.S.P.-R. : "par Rangard, curé député d'Anjou aux E-G;" Lettre d'un curé à un chanoine [S.l.n.d. Pp. 39] (on title page of copy

addendum to the cahier of the Bailliage of Amiens:

> Stemming from the present form of convocation of the States-General, it may arrive that owing to the small number of bishops in the meeting, the episcopal body be not sufficiently represented. And yet the bishops are the only judges of the faith. . . the born administrators of their dioceses, the principal judges of its needs. . . and nothing concerning the state of their dioceses. . . is foreign to them. In them resides the ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and nothing can be done there without their influence. Not being sufficiently represented, can they, without betraying their ministry, accede to the operations carried out without them? Would it be permitted to the clergy itself to consent to any gift or sacrifice in the States-General? Would it not be unheard of and, moreover, a great affliction for the clergy to find itself almost stripped of those whom God has established as chiefs in the quality of first pastors of the Church? We believe therefore that it is to the honor of the episcopal character and for the welfare of the clergy that the bishops appear in great numbers at the States-General . . . .[1]

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in B.S.P.-R. is written: "Brousse, curé de Volkrange, rue d'Anjou"), see especially, pp. 4, 5, 7, 9; with respect to the electoral disputes see curé accounts like: Ce qu'il faut dire, ou lettre d'un curé de campagne à un de ses amis, à l'occasion de ce qui s'est passé dans le chambre du clergé, à l'assemblée du bailliage principal de Dijon, et de ses bailliages secondaires [S.l., 20 avril 1789, Pp. 15], pp. 4-6. Drawing upon the account of the Curé Guilbert of Nancy, Jérôme describes the reaction in the capital of Lorraine to the decree of 24 January: "Pendant que l'ordre des curés, à l'instigation des curés de Nancy et principalement de Guilbert et de Mollevaut, se préparait avec cette activité à la lutte qui s'engage, ses adversaires, membres du haut clergé régulier, dignitaires des chapitres et religieux de tous ordres, n'étaient pas restés oisifs. A peine avait-on eu connaisance à Nancy des dispositions de l'ordonnance du 24 janvier, que de tous côtés des protestations s'étaient élevées dans leurs rangs.... Froissés dans leur amour-propre, blessés dans leur dignité, ils essayèrent de réclamer contre ce qu'ils appelaient une atteinte à leurs droits." Jérôme, op. cit., pp. 22-23.

1. Protestations diverses de Monseigneur l'Evêque, Cahier du clergé du bailliage d'Amiens, A.P., I., 736-737.

The account of the Bishop of Amiens and that of Jallet and other sources testify to the bitterness and intensity of anti-episcopal feeling in some regions of France at the time of the elections to the States-General. In fact the evidence indicates that such feeling came to a peak in the electoral assemblies of the clergy. It is, moreover, in the pamphlet literature that this course of opinion is most clearly revealed culminating just prior to the elections in diatribes like the work *À Messieurs les curés de France, sur la tenue prochaine des États-Généraux*, written in February-March 1789. It is probable that this pamphlet was the work of a member of the third estate, such as Maultrot, an acute observer who was keenly interested in and informed of clerical affairs; it is highly unlikely that a curé would publish such a strong criticism of the episcopate. The author emphasizes the class strife within the clergy between higher and lower clerics. Addressing the curés with respect to the coming electoral assemblies, he proclaims: "Here is your chance, men of the clergy, to break the chains of episcopal despotism."[1] The goodness of Louis XVI has presented you with an opportunity to recover your liberty and control of affairs. You must attend the electoral assemblies and elect representatives

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1. *A Messieurs les curés de France, sur la tenue prochaine des Etats-Généraux* [S.l.n.d. Pp. 11], p. 1.

who will uphold your interests. Furthermore, you must insert in the clerical cahiers your own demands.

Turning then with full fury upon the bishops, the author continues, "The misfortunes of the nation are, in great part, the fault of the higher clergy."[1] Their excessive pride, their lack of concern for their flocks have alienated them from the people. Moreover, most revolting, they have treated with disdain the curés and the regular clergy. In the eyes of some of them, the sacerdotal title is in itself no longer sufficient to secure admission to their copious table. "An ecclesiastic of the third estate has scarcely permission to sit in their presence."[2]

Given both the circulation of such umbrageous ideas of active hostility to the higher clergy and the provocative attempts by certain conservative prelates to control the electoral meetings, it is perhaps surprising that the assemblies of the clergy were not marked by more violence than is recorded. When all the balloting was completed and the results of the voting in the electoral assemblies were tabulated, the worst fears of the Bishops of Clermont and Amiens were proved justified. Of 308 ecclesiastical delegates elected, 242 were priests.[3] The lower

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1. Ibid., p. 6.
2. Ibid., p. 10.
3. Wallon, op. cit., p. 244.

clergy were thus theoretically in possession of the direction of the first estate in the States-General.

But the numerical superiority enjoyed by the men of the curate class in the clerical delegation was of little significance in itself until one vital question was answered: Would the curés follow the lead of the patriot spokesmen amongst them or would they accept the dictates of their natural leaders, the bishops? In the formal cahiers of the clergy, drawn up during the electoral meetings for presentation at Versailles and generally approved by the delegates, there is little indication of the course the curés would follow, or even of the nature of the vexing problem posed for the curé delegates to the States-General. Yet the cahiers comprise a rich source to indicate what the clerical order sought in the national assembly.[1] Echoes of the clash between higher and lower clergy can be found in the cahiers. In those areas where the strength of the curés was greatest, the intensity of the disturbance can be most accurately measured, for there the lower clergy would gain representation on the com-

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1. See the two classic studies by Beatrice F. Hyslop, A Guide to the General Cahiers of 1789 (New York, 1936), especially pp. 77-94; and the excellent study French Nationalism According to the General Cahiers (New York, 1934), especially, pp. 41, 42, 43, 73, 84, 85, 137. Also, the older and less valuable study by A. Denys-Buirette, Les questions religieuses dans les cahiers de 1789 (Paris, 1919), passim.

mittees redacting the cahiers and might set forth their grievances more clearly. Yet, even in the small groups meeting to draw up the cahiers the lower clergy would naturally tend to acquiesce in the wishes of their apostolic superiors, and few of the cahiers redacted at the bailliage level bear the marks of great radicalism. In some, such as those of Autun and Vienne, for instance, the presence of liberal pontiffs can be detected; but these are the exceptions.[1]

To the authors of the cahiers those principles that were most vital were, of course, those touching upon matters of religion. They expressed great concern over the "spirit of irreligion that has been introduced in the past years,"[2] over the decay of morals and the laxness of the observance of religion. In fact, something of a pattern is discernible in many cahiers, which open first with a denunciation of "l'esprit de philosophe" and the evils that it had engendered, then praise the king's action in calling the States, and finally set forth the hope that this "evil" situation will be remedied.

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1. See the succinct summary in W. H. Williams, "The French Clergy and the Convocation of the States-General (July 1788 to June 22, 1789)" [Unpublished Master's Thesis, Duke University, 1960], pp. 57-71.

2. Paris hors les murs: Cahier de l'ordre du clergé de la prevôte et vicomté de Paris hors les murs, pour servir d'instruction à ses députés aux Etats-Généraux de 1789, A.P., III, 231.

In part, the responsibility for the spread of incredulity and for the decay of faith and morals was laid on governmental administration throughout the kingdom. It was urged that the laws and ordinances concerning the observation of Holy Days and Sundays be more strictly enforced, and that the administration strive to prevent "working and such scandals as the frequenting of cabarets during the Holy Office."[1] Moreover, the number of holidays, some of which were but "vain observances"[2] or "superstitious practices," should be reduced.

An important means through which the government exercised control of morals was the censorship. As has been implied earlier, however, the censorship had become quite lax since July 1788. Perhaps for this reason many of the cahiers requested more stringent censorship[3] of those writings, plays, expositions, and cabarets, that were considered inimical to good morals or offensive to the Church in matters of religion. It is true that a

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1. Macon: Cahier général des plaintes, doléances et remonstrances de l'ordre du clergé; Art. 8, A.P., III, 621.

2. Sens: Cahier des doléances, plaintes, et remontrances du clergé du bailliage de Sens; Sanctification des Dimanches et fêtes et reduction des fêtes; Art. 3., A.P., V, 748.

3. Of 125 cahiers examined for this study, 45 favored greater censorship, 18 requested that those books against religion be censored, 12 would ban anonymous works, and 6 proposed complete liberty of the press.

few of the more liberal *cahiers* requested that only anonymous works be banned; two or three even took a stand for complete liberty of the press. But in the main the press's liberty was to be "restrained rather than extended," for the free circulation of works against morals and against religion had resulted in a "destruction of all principles."[1]

In an edict of November 1787, the government had recognized the civil status of Protestants in France, thus ending the policy of non-recognition of their existence. They had been given permission to record their births, marriages, and deaths, and their records were to be accepted as legal. Moreover, the curés were directed by the edict to declare their marriages legitimate. To many of the ecclesiastics, however, it was a scandal "to see the same priest now blessing the union of Catholics as a minister of the Church, now lending his ministry to the civil alliance of Protestants as an officer of the prince."[2] Many of the *cahiers* asked that the edict be revoked outright, others required that it be "modified and interpreted to conform to the principles established in the *Remonstrances* of the Assembly of

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1. *Saintes: Cahier des plaintes et doléances du clergé de la sénéchausée de Saintonge; la liberté de la presse; Art. 11, A.P.*, V, 662.

2. *Ibid., Edit de novembre 1782, concernant les non catholiques; Art. 2, A.P.*, V, 660.

the Clergy of 1788."[1] This would mean that marriages would not be performed by priests in a civil wedding.

To preserve the integrity of the Church the administration of the kingdom thus had certain tasks laid upon it. But the edifice of the Church itself needed strengthening. It was deemed essential "to establish the government of the Church on fixed bases and to ban all that was arbitrary."[2] Certain reforms were needed: the unity of the breviary, of the catechism, and of the liturgy throughout the kingdom; the requirement of residence for bishops;[3] the revival of the diocesan synods, councils, and other church meetings;[4] and the abolition of the taxes paid to Rome under the name of annates, of the rights of déport,[5]

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1. Paris hors les murs, A.P., III, 231.

2. Alençon: Cahier des Voeux, remonstrances et doléances du clergé du bailliage principal d'Alençon. . . ; Clergé; Art, 1, A.P., I, 208.

3. Or, as most often expressed, the requirement that those holding benefices be required to remain in residence for a certain part of the year, varying from at least six months to the full twelve.

4. This was one of the complaints most mentioned in the cahiers examined: it appeared in 78 out of 125 of the writings or a majority of 62 percent.

5. The right of déport was held by bishops and archbishops (mainly in Normandy) giving them the revenue of the benefice of a dead curé during its vacancy, on the condition that a priest be kept there to serve it. In the diocese of Coutances, where the bishop held the right to two-thirds of the total benefices, the prelate himself estimated his revenue from this source at 20,000 livres a year. For firm statements against the déport see the cahiers of the Clergy of Coutances, Blois, and Mantes et Meulan.

and of the casuel forcé,[1] a fee which "revolted the honest pastors."[2]

In addition, tighter discipline was to be maintained within the ecclesiastical Order. Most of the cahiers, for example, entreated that the religious orders be maintained;[3] yet, at the same time, there were many requests to suppress their mendicity and to make them more useful by alloting them the care of the schools, the care of the poor, and other tasks.

With regard to fiscal affairs, the cahiers volunteered the renunciation of pecuniary privileges.[4] The clergy were willing to submit to taxation. But as necessary corollaries the State was to assume the debt of the clergy, which had been con-

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1. The obligatory casuel were the charges levied by clergy at the occasions of baptism, marriage, etc. "It was demanded and paid with a certain repugnance of both parties, because it seemed that the tithes should spare the faithful of charges of this sort." Article "casuel" in Marion, Dictionnaire des institutions de la France au XVIIème et XVIIIème siècles (Paris, 1923), p. 74.

2. Haut-Limousin: Cahier des doléances du clergé des sénéchausées de Limoges et de Saint-Yrieix; Article troisième; Intérêts du clergé; 3-casuel, A.P., III, 563.

3. Fifty-eight of 125 examined; while not a majority, this is a considerable number considering the diversity of the cahiers, the forms employed, and of the wishes expressed.

4. A great majority (75 percent of the cahiers examined) expressed the willingness to renounce the fiscal privileges. Of these some 15 percent (16 cahiers) stipulated that the clergy's debt must be assumed by the State.

tracted largely in the paying of the free gift to the crown, and the clergy was to cease to offer its periodic grant. Moreover, the tithe was to be preserved and some standardization of it was to be attempted.[1] Finally, the vast Church lands were to be protected and preserved.

Intrinsically connected with these matters of finances were the demands of the lower clergy for an increase in their allotted portion. But these demands were also bound up closely with the entire conflict between the higher and the lower clergy; in those cahiers in which the curés seem to have had great influence the conflict is readily apparent.[2] Although recently increased, the portion congrue was still quite insufficient according to most of the cahiers;[3] a curé received but 700 livres, and a vicaire only 300, while certain of the prelates had 100,000 livres, or more. There was little uniformity, however, in the actual amounts requested for the lower clergy. Solicitations varied from 1200 to 3000 livres for curés, and for

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1. Blois: Cahier. . ; Art. 48, A.P. II, 582.

2. See the cahiers of the Clergy of Mantes, A.P., III, 653; Montreuil-sur-Mer, A.P., IV, 61; Nîmes, A.P., IV, 236; and Rhodez, A.P., V, 553.

3. On this point the cahiers are closer to unanimity than on any other: a majority of 78 percent favored increasing the revenue of curés, or vicaires, or both.

vicaires about half these sums.[1] Accompanying these demands for higher pay were others of a secondary nature which in the language of to-day might well be termed 'fringe benefits.' There was to be provided a fund to aid sick curés; pensions for the aged; and places as canons in the cathedral chapters for those priests who had served long years in their parish. To obtain funds for the pensions and for aid to the sick it was proposed to unite the simple benefices of the diocese as they became vacant into a single account, and to draw from their earnings during a year or two before these benefices were re-assigned. Such a plan had been already employed by the Bishop of Langres.

Not only were the curés seeking to better themselves in a financial way, in addition they sought to strengthen their position within the hierarchy. They asked permission to form separate bodies within each diocese, that they might meet, discuss their problems, and decide on necessary actions. Such organizations had been forbidden by a government edict of many years' standing, and it was requested that this act be revoked. Fur-

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1. Relatively few of the cahiers examined specified the amounts to be given. Of those that did, seven favored 1200 livres; eight asked for 1500; two for 1800; four for 2000; seven for 2400; and one for 3000. Two others stipulated that a salary be established in terms of an amount of grain, and that if the grain price increased, the salary would be augmented accordingly.

thermore, there were demands for equal opportunity within the hierarchy for advancement to the episcopacy. To favor the lower clergy some cahiers requested that "the first dignities of the Church be conferred only upon those priests who have merited the confidence of the people through their functions as minister during several years; and that birth or favor cease to serve as prerequisites."[1] It was considered "indispensable to have served as a novice in an inferior position"[2] before elevation to the episcopacy. Nor was the concept of equal opportunity unexpressed; at Rhodez it was stated in general terms: "All places, dignities, or other posts--ecclesiastic, military, or civil--[should] be open to both nobles and non-nobles unless, in the founding of these places, it has been stipulated that they are to be destined to persons of a particular order." Equality of opportunity was not interpreted as equality among members of the hierarchy, however, for there was no explicit statement of this revolutionary idea. And yet, here and there the implicit presence of even

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1. Labourt: Cahier de remonstrances que le clergé du bailliage de Labourt remet à son député, pour le presenter au Roi, dans l'assemblée des Etats-Généraux du royaume, à Versailles; Sur la discipline ecclésiastique; Art. 6, A.P., III, 423.

2. Mantes, A.P., III, 655.

3. Rhodez: Cahier des doléances, plaintes et remonstrances de l'ordre du clergé, contenant les instructions et pouvoirs donnés aux deputés audit ordre aux Etats-Généraux de 1789; Titre VIII; Objets particuliers; Art. 2, A.P., V, 554.

this concept may be detected. Certainly, the concept of equality within the Church of all benefice-holders was not weakened by the electoral procedures for the assemblies laid down by the Règlement du Roi, with equal representation given to bishops and curés, along with equal rights in voting. It is not surprising therefore to find entreaties "that the ecclesiastical assemblies be formed by free vote and that deputies be chosen in a number proportional to and sufficient for each of the four classes of those taxable, viz. chapters, simple benefices, curés, and regular clergy."[1] Or, more specifically, "that the order of curés, as the most numerous, have in the ecclesiastical assemblies as many representatives as the other classes of benefice-holders . . ."[2] The idea of equality of representation represents an attempt to leap far beyond the subservient status of the lower clergy in the eighteenth century; heretofore in the periodic assemblies of the clergy, convened every fifth and tenth year, no curés had been admitted.

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1. Toulouse: Doléances, remonstrances et instructions du clergé de la sénéchausée de Toulouse; Première partie: Section Première; Administration temporelle du clergé; Art. 1, A.P., VI, 29.

2. Perche: Cahier des doléances de l'ordre de clergé de la province du Perch, arrêté dans l'assemblée générale tenue en la ville de Bellesme, contenant le procès-verbal de nomination du député dudit ordre; Clergé; Art. 2, A.P., V, 320.

The clergy were thus greatly occupied with their own affairs and with those concerning religion in the State. If the clergy seemed less vitally concerned with reforms in the administration of the kingdom than their colleagues of the nobility and third, they nevertheless devoted some space in their cahiers to proposed changes, which for the most part echoed those offered by the two other orders. There were thus demands to reform the educational system, and concurrently, to establish schools in each parish; to provide for aid to the poor; to re-do the civil and criminal codes; to abolish the lettres de cachet; to reduce the number of ecclesiastics in the king's household; to abolish abuses of hunting privileges by nobles; to establish no new tax without the consent of the States-General; and, finally, to guarantee individual liberty.

With regard to representative assemblies, many of the cahiers demanded the establishment of Estates in each province. The States-General would be convened periodically, at least every five years. Given these entreaties, along with those requesting the frequent calling of clerical synods and councils, it can be seen that even amongst the clergy there existed a great desire to re-invigorate representative institutions.

Once given the re-invigoration, however, there was disagreement amongst the clergy over one most important point viz.,

how were deputies to vote in these assemblies, by head or by order? Not all the cahiers treated this subject. In fact less than half of those examined set forth a definite position on the matter. However, amongst these, there existed a clear division.[1] A bare majority took the view so emphatically expressed at Villers-Cotterets that:

> The reciprocal independence of the three orders being the basis of public liberty, no one of the three orders shall be bound by the two others either in the national assemblies, or in the bailliages, or in the States-General; hence, we declare that in no case and under no pretext whatever shall the three orders be permitted to deliberate in common, or to vote by head, unless such shall have been consented by each after separate deliberation.[2]

Some reiterated the "ancient and constitutional right" of the orders to vote separately, and added that it was also the right of each "to be independent and not to be bound or forced by the united wishes of the two other orders."[3] Or, while preferring vote by order, the writers of a cahier might deem it wise to

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1. Out of 125 cahiers of the Clergy examined, 35 favored vote by order and 24 vote by head. These were concerned only with the States-General, but presumably they would adhere to the same principle in the Provincial Estates.

2. Villers-Cotterets: Cahier de doléances de l'ordre du clergé du bailliage de Villers-Cotterets; Art. 1, A.P., VI, 187.

3. Dijon: Cahier de l'ordre du clergé du bailliage principal de Dijon, et des bailliages secondaires de Beaune, Nuits, Auxonne, et Saint-Jean-de-Losne. . . ; I ; Arts. 29, 30, A.P. III, 124-125.

leave its deputy entirely "free to take the side which appears to him the most advantageous."[1] Two dozen only of those cahiers printed in the Archives Parlementaires declared in favor of vote by head. These ranged from the statements of Metz, that voting be "by head for all objects concerning taxation and by order for all others,"[2] and Dôle, that votes be counted by head for all questions "except those which regard religion or ecclesiastical discipline,"[3] to the flat assertions of Sézanne and Ponthieu that the "orders shall work together, and that votes shall be counted by head."[4]

To summarize the cahiers of the divers bailliages is to elucidate the difficulties that confronted the Clergy, for the men of the surplice, in composing these writings, were responding in multifarious ways to the exigencies of the times, to the

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1. Mantes, A.P., III, 656.

2. Metz: Cahier des pouvoirs et instructions de député l'ordre du clergé du bailliage de Metz. . . ; Chapitre premier; Constitution et administration; Art, 1, A.P., III, 759.

3. Dôle: Cahier des instructions et doléances de la chambre du clergé de l'assemblée baillivale de Dôle, en Franche-Comte, pour être présenté aux Etats-Généraux en 1789; Art. 3, A.P., III, 152.

4. Sézanne: Cahier des doléances, plaintes, et remontrances du clergé du bailliages de Sézanne et Châtillon; Chapitre II; Administration, A.P., V, 763; Ponthieu: Cahier des doléances du clergé de la sénéchausée de Ponthieu; Art. 1, A.P., V, 428.

needs within their order and to those outside it. Manifestly similar in their statements of complaint, as in their defense of privilege, these documents acquired distinct coloring only as their authors were attuned in varying degrees of acuteness to the demands of particular groups, of the lower clergy, of the monks, or of the indigent of the third estate. Greater sensitivity was thus exhibited by some cahiers in setting forth entreaties to ameliorate the plight of the lower clergy and to strengthen its position of influence within the hierarchy. Most cahiers recognized the necessity of augmenting the stipend of the curés, while others would go far beyond this gesture to request equal representation for them in the clerical synods and assemblies. Confronted with the intensity and vigor of the onset of philosophe incredulity, with the increasing criticism of the Church, and with the decline of clerical influence, nearly all the cahiers would appeal for a redressment of this situation, for a vigorous combating of unbelief and for a preservation and extension of ecclesiastical authority. To enable the Church to assert itself, a tighter discipline was requested, together with a maintenance of unity of the liturgy and of the catechism. Furthermore, the powerful weapon of education was to be unsheathed, to be wielded more vigorously in the conversion of the young. In addition, the objects of popular discontent and derision were to be eliminated.

While the cahiers were being formulated during the months of March and April 1789, pamphlets from members of the third estate were appealing to the curés to come over entirely to their side. An ardent Gallicanist tract which addresses itself to a curé delegate to the States in the form of a letter thus makes it clear that the curés are expected to think primarily of the nation's needs:

> It was with great pleasure that I have just learned that you were made a deputy to the States-General. Please accept my most sincere congratulations. Your broad knowledge, your patriotism, your love for the public good and for the glory of France--all these things combine to persuade me that you will be worthy of this choice and that your rôle in this august assembly will be that of a curé citizen.[1]

The author takes for granted that certain standard reforms will be accomplished in the States-General, e.g. abolition of the pecuniary immunity of the clergy and nobility, and adjustment of the tax burden. With respect to the traditional Gallicanism of the French Church, he anticipates the re-establishment of the pragmatic sanction and the abolition of the Concordat with Rome. In practical and internal matters, he advocates the equalizing of incomes within the hierarchy to raise the stipends

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1. Lettre à M. le curé de . . . , député aux Etats-Généraux, sur les principaux abus qu'il faut réformer dans la cour de Rome, et dans le clergé de France; par M. de Francheville, théoligien français et anti-Ultramontain [A Cosmopolis, 1789. Pp. 108], p. 3.

of the lower clergy, and he supports the tightening of ecclesiastical discipline in general.[1]

Employing the same stylistic device of the open letter, another writer declares that it is time to speak out and exhorts the curés to unite in the States-General against their bishops. Although the author of the pamphlet Tempus loquendi; une lettre de l'auteur declares that he is a member of the clergy, and of the lower clergy, he predicates a position of such patent insubordination and disrespect toward his spiritual superiors in relation to the bulk of other writers of the day, both clerical and non-clerical, that he must be considered in an exceptional class whatever his true identity. Writing after the elections to the States-General but prior to the meeting thereof, the writer declares the most humiliating thing about the clergy to be the continual tales of scandal which issue from the lives of certain ecclesiastics and which circulate in the nation to the discredit of all men of the surplice. And the bishops must bear a great deal of the responsibility for the discredit which has fallen upon the clergy; their luxurious lives, their un-Christian behavior are greatly responsible. Yet public opinion, so important in this epoch, no longer confuses you (the lower clergy) with

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1. Ibid., p. 8 ff, passim.

the evil-doers.[1] The public have learned to distinguish between the greedy, idle, corrupt clergy and the virtuous, hard-working and useful curés.

With a truly revolutionary cry, the author then urges the curés to break their bonds of servitude and subservience in the approaching assembly and to speak out for the interests of the nation. He thus writes:

> Arm yourselves, in the presence of the nation assembled, with a vigorous resolution, one which will cut down prejudices and destroy forever the phantoms of grandeur that have enslaved you, dishonored you, and rendered you almost unrecognizable. Send back to the ultramontanes their marionettes laden with rich adornments; break the shameful bonds of ornamentation that have bound your own hands, shoulders, and heads. True, the enterprise is a formidable one, but this makes it all the more worthy of your efforts. There can be no question as to the outcome: speak as apostles and you are sure to perform miracles. Twenty million Christians await this revolution, upon which depends their sanctification. . . . The truth will always find true disciples. Speak! All of France shall listen. Speak without fear; your silence would be a crime. The time is auspicious, the day fixed by Providence--Tempus loquendi.[2]

Having been unable to attend the bailliage meeting to elect delegates to the States, the author declares that he sent a letter conveying his sentiments [Lettre du curé de xxx à

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1. Tempus loquendi; une lettre de l'auteur [S.l.n.d. Pp. 37], p. 6. His statement reads: "L'opinion publique ne vous confond plus avec le clergé factice, ouvrage vicieux de la cupidité des hommes, et l'objet continuel de leurs sarcasmes, de leurs ironies, de leur haine implacable, et de leurs trop justes censures."

2. Ibid., pp. 6-7.

messieurs les curés séans à l'assemblé générale de M. . . . , convoquée le 9 mars 1789]. In this work he affirms to have urged the curés to elect one of their own and not a prelate as delegate. Why do the bishops fear a curé delegate? What is the basis of their fears?

> Are they apprehensive lest a curé betray their interests, these men to whom the curés have for such a long time confided their own interests? Do they insinuate that a curé might find irresistible the appeal of a fat pension or an important benefice? . . . Certainly the opulent clergy tremble at the thought that we should rely overly upon that third estate which comprises our brothers, our parents, our friends--all overwhelmed like us with the burden of arbitrary impositions.[1]

In reply, some of the reformist clergy accepted the appeal of the third estate for union. In a pamphlet like the Réflexions d'un curé sur l'administration des biens de l'église we see evidence that some reformist curés were convinced of the existence of a common bond between the third estate and the curés and of the necessity for a collaboration of the two in the States-General to obtain needed reforms. Yet this work illustrates another factor--the tendency of the lower clergy still to view the critical property question uniquely in terms of equal distribution of Church revenues amongst all ecclesiastics, a distribution which only the coming national assembly could carry through.

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1. Ibid., pp. 34-35.

For once a general concession of the principle of equality of taxation had been obtained within the first estate the clerical authors evince, as the title of this work indicates, a primary concern with equalization of ecclesiastical stipends as a fundamental step in the strengthening of the curés' position in the hierarchy. But in their willingness to co-operate as "ecclesiastical citizens" with the third estate to obtain improvements in their own order and reform of the feudal structure of society, the curés still appear unaware of the threat presented by the extremists of the third on the property question. More important, they appear unaware that this lack of consensus was an indication of the divergence of outlook between the articulate curés and some of the third estate with respect to the ultimate place of the clergy in society and to the rôle of the curé within it. While the clergy in their cahiers were recording their basic convictions of the need to uphold the traditional rights and privileges of the Church--with the notable exception of clerical tax privileges which were renounced in about 75 per cent of the secondary cahiers[1]--a certain number of the men of the third

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1. W. H. Williams, op. cit., p. 51; Yet Beatrice Hyslop notes with her usual acumen: "Carried to its legal limits, the abolition of clerical privileges meant an end of the ecclesiastical courts as well as of tax privileges, but the cahiers of the clergy had no such idea in view. The privileges renounced were exemptions or immunities prejudicial to the lay orders and not

estate were expressing views hostile to the continuation of Church ownership of its properties. Some cahiers of the third echoed earlier curé demands for State utilization of funds to be derived from the suppression of small monasteries or from the complete dissolution of all monastic orders.[1] But these extremist threats in the cahiers, like their counterparts in the pamphlet literature, appear not to have altered the view of patriot curés that the real problem was to introduce equalizing reform into the administration of income from Church lands and not to defend the lands themselves from confiscation. The lower clergy doubtless took heart from the general attitude of the third estate so clearly reflected in both the pamphlets and in the cahiers that the Church should be maintained as administrator of its lands, that it should pay taxes as did laymen, and that the inviolability of property principle should apply to ecclesiastical property as to lay property.

At the same time other curés hesitated to follow the lead of their articulate reform-minded colleagues. In time of controversy, these curés observed, the clergy had traditionally

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those inherent in the corporate existence of the Gallican Church. In fact, sixty-three cahiers of the clergy [names not given] urged the retention of Church privileges." See Beatrice F. Hyslop, French Nationalism in 1789 according to the General Cahiers (New York, 1943), pp. 103-104.

1. Cf. Hyslop, op. cit., p. 105.

played a rôle of mediation. The pamphlet entitled Catéchisme des curés auvergnats, written in March-April 1789, urged the curés to remember their traditional function and to continue it in the coming electoral assembly at Auvergne. One of the main concerns of the curé authors of this pamphlet is the redaction of the cahier of the clergy of Auvergne; hence it is in part a model cahier for the delegates to follow. Much of the content is mild in tone. The authors maintain that the curé who redacts a cahier must give thanks to Louis XVI for calling the States-General and thus restoring the French nation to its primitive rights to reform the constitution and to accord taxes. Furthermore, the king is to be praised for the electoral ruling of 24 January which evinces divine guidance in returning to the curés a right which had been usurped. Praise is offered, too, to Necker, for "he alone is capable of seeing this great work through to the end." To avert the danger of dominance by the nobility and higher clergy, deliberation should be by head and not by order. But all three orders must be preserved, for they are important pillars which support the monarchy.[1]

Although mild in some respects, the curés of Auvergne

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1. Catéchisme des curés auvergnats amis de leur patrie, de leur roi, et de leurs frères [S.l., 1789, Pp. 131], pp. 5-7, passim.

are firm in their specific requests. The list of demands is a conventional one to re-inforce the position of the "third estate of the clergy."[1] Curés must thus be permitted to form syndicates; the edicts of 1656 and 1695 must be abrogated in the parts which limit the immediate jurisdiction of curés in their parishes; an increase in stipend is requested for the lower clergy; the diocesan chambers must be reformed; and neither secular nor religious houses should be abolished--instead they should be given useful tasks to perform.[2]

It is, however, when the curé authors touch upon the special problem posed by their position in the clergy that they reveal their cautious and mediatory ideas. They state:

> Although born for the most part in the third estate, although treated for a long time until now as the third estate of their order, the curés do not ignore the fact that by their consecration they are members of the clergy. They are cognizant that in their capacity as pastors they are essential members of the clergy and, by this same character, they are fathers and spiritual doctors to the nobles as they are to the workmen and the shepherds. The curés have no anti-patriotic projects. They should be happy in the present circumstances to be mediators.[3]

In the weeks just prior to the States-General, the curés of Auvergne thus re-state the problem of conflicting loyalties

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1. Ibid., p. 99.

2. Ibid., pp. 101-118, passim.

3. Ibid., p. 11.

which the Revolution and, in a broader sense, the modern age introduced into the French Catholic clergy. That the Revolution would so radically transform the position of the priest in society could not, of course, be foretold by writers on the eve of the States-General. Nor could the traditionalist solution of mediation, which was offered by such writers and which was adopted during the first seven weeks of the States-General by the clergy, be seen at the time as inadequate. In their failure to perceive the importance of the preservation of Church property as a means to maintain a reformed clergy in a position of independence, however, the cautious and radical writers alike overlooked a matter of fundamental significance.

CONCLUSION

To retrace the thread of our argument in this study for purposes of summation and conclusion, let us recall that since the revocation of the Edict of Nantes by Louis XIV in 1685 the independent legal position of non-Catholics had been abolished and that only in 1787 were the civil rights of Protestants in France restored. In the course of the eighteenth century therefore the French parish priest served as an officer of the civil State for most Frenchmen, preparing certificates of birth, recording marriages and births, and supervising the education of the young on the primary and secondary levels. In addition, the French curés together with the regular clergy served as the principal agencies for the distribution of charity to the impoverished of the kingdom.

By virtue of their civil functions in the French State, the curés thus occupied a special position vis-à-vis the sovereign of France and his ministry. At the same time the traditional position of the Gallican Church since Louis XIV, whereby the

king was supreme in temporal matters and the French clergy were exempted from the doctrinal authority of the Roman curia, re-inforced the direct relationship between monarch and priest. It followed, as an important consequence, that the periodic increases in the basic livelihood of most curés, called the portion congrue, were effected directly through the royal administration; the income of the French lower clergy depended only indirectly upon the capriciousness of the governing body of the Gallican Church, the quinquennial General Assembly of the Clergy.

In the writings of clergymen of all walks in the decade and a half prior to the Revolution, we find an anxiety over the effects upon the French population of the untiring campaign waged by the philosophes and their followers in the later eignteenth century against what they considered to be iniquities within the Catholic Church and against the continuation under its aegis of attitudes that smacked of fanatical religious intolerance. Yet Voltaire, one of the arch-detractors of Catholicism, made an exception in favor of the French lower clergy; towards them he voiced considerably more solicitude and sympathy than for the whole of the Gallican hierarchy. To Voltaire the class of curés and vicaires, unlike other useless elements, comprised honest laborers who toiled long and hard ministering to the masses for little gain. In his scheme of a reformed and natural religion, the priests were to serve primarily as moral preceptors to the

people by setting good examples of exemplary action and by instructing them in morality and virtue. Rousseau revealed in his Profession de foi d'un vicaire savoyard that he shared some of Voltaire's beliefs, including a healthy repugnance for idle theological dispute; he insisted, like the Sage of Ferney, that the priest should be concerned not with scholastic disputation on matters of doctrine but with the practical instruction of his flocks to supplement and encourage their innate consciences and to lead them in the paths of virtue and justice.

The intendancy of the philosophe Turgot at Limoges and his later term as Minister of Finances under Louis XVI illustrate an extension in the employment of French curés as practical agents of royal administration. As intendant, Turgot utilized the curés first as advisors on local matters such as grain distribution and cattle diseases. Later, in 1770, he used the curés to administer the charity bureaux established to combat the ravages of that famine year. Through the functions he conferred upon the parish priests, Turgot displayed in a fashion not seen before in France his confidence and his respect for the lower clergy as worthy agents of the civil administration.

The editor of the Encyclopédie, Denis Diderot, who received contributions for his monumental publication from Voltaire, Turgot, and Rousseau, was likewise convinced that some clergy performed useful work amongst the populace. But Diderot, for

all his philosophical subtlety, envisaged the clergy in blunt terms--that is, as either good or bad. By his criticisms he sought to restore the 'bad' clergy to their primitive virtues. Yet if his judgements upon the clergy were at times oddly dull it was not for lack of sharp acumen, for Diderot alone perceived clearly the equivocal position of the curé in eighteenth-century society, a creature, as he said, "suspended between heaven and earth," vacillating between ultimate allegiance to one authority or the other. In a retrospective analysis, the equivocal position of French curés may be described as of a polar type, pulling them between the Church, their spiritual functions, and the accompanying loyalties on the one hand, and on the other, the State, their rôles as citizen and civil functionary, and the implied allegiance to the monarch and to the nation. What appears to be the earliest pamphlet illustrating certain aspects of the double position of the curé is Abbé Henri Reymond's Droits des curés et des paroisses, considerés sous leur double rapport, spirituel et temporel, published in 1776. One of the principal themes outlined by Reymond was the usefulness of the curés to the French king by virtue of their salutary influence in the maintenance of order in the kingdom and in preserving and raising moral standards amongst the people. Reymond thus maintained that the curés as "public persons" had an important civil rôle to play in society

and that the great utility of their work in this respect was demonstrable. For this reason the curés should be restored in their rights and privileges within the hierarchy. Drawing upon Richerist doctrine to thicken his brief, Reymond insisted upon the restoration of the tithe to the curés and upon the augmentation of the portion congrue. So cogent and convincing were the Abbé's ideas that his writings became virtual textbooks for the curé courses in economic betterment.

In a significant work from the pen of a curé published in 1785 and entitled L'Ecclésiastique citoyen, we note the tendency of some clerical writers to view in their capacity as citizens the question of reform in the Church to render it of greater utility to the State and to Catholicism. To comprehend the heightened awareness of this author and of other curés of the need for reform to promote the efficacity and usefulness of the clergy, one must take cognizance of the continuing climate of criticism surrounding the ecclesiastical estate; moreover, the censorious works of men like d'Holbach which circulated in France in the 1770's and 1780's did not spare even the parish priests in the cold rage of their onslaught upon the Church. In the face of the attack, some curés affirmed their inability to hold ranks in a defense of the whole of the clerical order against charges of uselessness and corruption. Instead, authors like the Citizen Priest adopted a harder line and stressed the neces-

sity for reform in the hierarchy. Nor can the failure of the General Assembly of the Clergy of 1780 to take positive steps to aid the lower clergy despite gradual inflation in the price of basic foodstuffs in France be ignored in considering the urgent phrasing of the reform proposals. That some of the lower clergy, furthermore, were irked by the opulence and social prestige of the humanly-instituted intermediate clergy--the abbots, priors, and canons--is fully documented in the writings of the time.

In the period prior to the first Assembly of Notables convoked by Calonne for February 1787, some lay pamphlet writers devoted special attention to the question of clerical wealth and expressed their belief that the clergy should pay a fair share of the tax burden. Nor were some of the clergy unsympathetic to this viewpoint. The Abbé Jallet, to cite an example, in a work published in 1785 displayed regret that some clergy had misused Church income and had thereby called into doubt the sacred character of the Church's income and its holdings. In his words, the clergy had forgotten that they were but "stewards of the property of the poor." From their former position of bitter contemplation of the lost tithe and of complaint of their meagre portion, the clerical writers thus turned to the broader consideration of the immunity of Church income from taxation; moreover, from the lower clergy on the eve of the Revolution came gradually a near-universal expression of willingness to abandon this ancient

clerical prerogative.

Whereas clerical writers showed a genuine awareness of the demands for equality of taxation that appeared so frequently in the pamphlet press, they passed over with little or no mention the more radical statements upon ecclesiastical affairs that occasionally were published. Perhaps because they represented such extreme positions on clerical matters, critical works like the Réforme du clergé seem to have passed relatively unheeded by literate spokesmen for the clergy. Yet the message was clear enough: the clergy have erred in acquiring property, for their kingdom is not of this world. Through the acquisition of lands they have become civil and political members of the State. But they must be deprived of this civil status and returned to a condition of apostolic simplicity whereby in legal terms they are deceased--denied rights either to own or legate goods of any sort. Yet, the clergy are not to be abandoned. The two useful elements, the bishops and the curés, will be preserved and provided with ample incomes. Non-essential clergy, however, shall not be replaced in their functions when they die and their numbers will thus gradually decline. With respect to the duties of the curés, the author of the Réforme lacked complete lucidity. One point, however, was evident: in his scheme the lower clergy were to be restricted to spiritual pursuits--administering the sacraments, giving comfort in time of illness of misfortune,

hearing confessions, and granting absolution. Such a complete elimination of the civil status of the clergy could not be effected without the confiscation of Church property; hence, the seizure of Church land was fundamental to the program of the radical reformer of the clergy. Confiscation of Church property would also place the clergy in a position of increased dependence upon the State.

Increasingly in the period 1787-1789, the authors of writings sympathetic to the lower clergy--including those by curés themselves--envisage the curés' rôle in terms which, if not purely Voltairean, approach those of Rousseau in the Vicaire savoyard. Yet, as seen above, an occasional writer of an extreme viewpoint, although convinced of the usefulness of the curés' functions, discloses a concept of the curés' rightful place in society which eliminates any equivoque: the curés are to concern themselves solely with the cult and with spiritual ministrations to the masses. Adequately salaried by the State, they will lose their civil personalities and will cease to perform strictly temporal duties. That a contradiction exists between the two visions of the curé's rôle seems apparent; and that the question of Church income and property is intrinsically connected with the ultimate rôle which the curé will be allotted in French society is no less obvious. Unaware, it appears, of the threat from

what might be termed the extreme reformist left, the curés evince interest in clerical privileges only gradually as the heads of the hierarchy, the prelates and their associates, reveal a reluctance to yield in their absolute opposition to concessions touching Church privileges or finances. The curés in their capacity as citizens express sympathy with the moderate reformers of the third estate and with their reasoning, which is grounded in the assumption that all citizens owe taxes to the State.

Now and then a curé writer proclaims a willingness to go farther than mere payment of taxes. Such was the ingenious author of Le Voeu de la raison who offers the cleverest solution to the theoretical dilemma presented by the question of Church property. In brief, the uniqueness of the curé's position lies in the subtle distinction he draws between ecclesiastical property destined to provide for the maintenance of the altars of the cult and that which is not. For him the only veritable Church property is the former. It follows that the property held by the divers religious communities is not ecclesiastical property but lay property. As such, it might be confiscated by the crown --especially in view of the contemporary circumstance that "there is not enough lay property to suffice for the expenses of the State."

In the period of March-August 1788 the voices which curés

raised for reform were few and weak. Few clerical pamphlets were published in this period. No impetus was provided by the extraordinary General Assembly of the Clergy convoked for May 1788 for--perhaps as expected--the men of the Assembly did little but protest the threatened infringement of the privileges of the first estate with respect to taxation. If the lower clergy in general were docile in their reform proposals at this juncture, nevertheless, from time to time, an occasional cleric conveyed in a pamphlet a feeling of apprehension concerning the entire matter of Church finances and property. And some, like the clerical co-author of Réflexions, bestirred themselves to an elaborate defense of Church wealth. In the end, though, it was to Louis XVI that the clergy turned in their writings in an appeal for justice at the hands of a bienfaisant monarch.

But the serious critics of the clergy's wealth would not be put off with the facile or the elaborate in argumentation. To the audacious cleric who wrote in defense of the vast holdings of the Church, they replied that the greater part of Church income from its lands was not employed as it had been veritably destined by those who had bequeathed it. Furthermore, they retorted, to ground a defense of Church wealth in the presupposition that at some future time the inequities of clerical administration would be reformed and the income properly employed, was to

construct a logical framework in sand.[1]

Out of that nexus of events in Dauphiné, precipitated by the protests which the Grenoble Parlement issued against the May edicts of Brienne's Ministry to institute plenary courts together with the subsequent series of actions culminating in the Assembly at Romans, came the first breakthrough in the struggle of the French curés for the right to elect their own representatives to meetings of a governmental nature. Henceforward, curés throughout the kingdom evinced an increasing preoccupation with the principle of representation, especially after the announcement on 23 August 1788 of the convocation of the States-General for May 1789. The composite work published by a group of curés at Avignon following the September meeting of the Romans Assembly reflected the general tone of curé statements.[2] The curés were clearly heartened by the declaration of the benevolent Louis in his decree of convocation of his intention to reform all parts of the administration and to correct all abuses complained of by

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1. Cf. Chapter V, pp. 190 ff, and the statements of the author of the Lettre à M.D., par M.L.; ou examen d'un ouvrage intitulé: "Reflexions sur les immunités ecclésiastiques considerées dans leur rapport avec les maximes du droit public et l'intérêt national" [Paris, 1788].

2. Cf. Chapter IV, pp. 126 ff. The Mémoire pour les curés de France relativement à la prochaine convocation des Etats-Généraux [Avignon, 1788. Pp. 94].

the weaker sections of the three orders. His words encouraged them in their hope to be represented at Versailles and to be heeded in the counsels they would there offer. Their principal fear was that they would not have in the States-General a proportionate number of delegates taken from their class and freely elected by them. In the course of their reasoning to uphold the principle of curé representation (not only in the States-General but in the periodic Assemblies of the Clergy), the authors of the significant Mémoire insisted that since the clergy were assembled by the king primarily to conduct temporal affairs and, in particular, to vote the don gratuit, they might be considered to have been convened in their capacity as citizens. "It is as citizens that the ecclesiastics form the first order of the State; and it is in their civil capacity that the king convokes them . . . ." The curés of the Mémoire thus affirm their belief that when treating temporal affairs--whether it be in an assembly of their order or in the States-General--they acted as Frenchmen obeying the summons of their monarch to deliberate upon matters affecting his realm, matters mainly temporal and economic.

The activities of the curés in Dauphiné and the triumphs which they scored were observed by colleagues throughout France and led in time to the development of active curé movements in Lorraine, Orléans, Brittany, and Berry. Meantime, the second

Assembly of Notables was convoked by Jacques Necker for November 6, 1788. From about this date the great interest and imagination of Frenchmen in the affairs of State was reflected in the rising tide of pamphlets that flooded the bookshops and vendors of the arcaded Palais Royal in Paris and extended to the distant reading rooms of the provinces. In the main, the tripartite program of the third estate constituted the major subjects of debate in the pamphlets. This program comprised double representation for the third, deliberation in common, and vote by head in the meetings. And the mounting ire of ardent patriots fell scorchingly upon the clerical order as the second Notables adjourned with no concessions to popular wishes and with the higher clergy having distinguished themselves in their opposition to granting any.

To read the multitude of writings produced in this period is to sense the intensity of the bitter scorn provoked by the failure of the Notables to approve any part of the program of the third. That in the eyes of some lay writers the clergy were the arch villains in the drama of the privileges is revealed by certain proposals made in the pamphlet literature. The right of the clergy to exist as a separate order and to have representatives in the States-General is questioned. What was once an intermittent leitmotif becomes a common refrain through over-repetition: the clergy must abstain both from interference in

political affairs and from the undue exercise of influence amongst the masses in matters temporal.

By way of reply, some curé writers, like the author of the Mémoire du clergé citoyen,[1] maintained that the clergy have not been deprived of their civil existence and that it is absurd to claim, as do some lay critics, that an enjoyment of the usufruct from their possessions represents the sole temporal backing of the clergy. Again, the curé defenders took refuge in their cherished contention that as representatives of the poor of the kingdom--by virtue of their long and intimate acquaintance with them and their plight--they were qualified to attend the States-General.

The Abbé André Morellet, looking back upon the events of 1788 and afterwards, saw the great tragedy for the clergy to have been the ultimate loss of their property and their fatal error to have been their failure to stress instead of their rights as an order, their veritable rights of property. In addition, Morellet personally regretted having espoused so completely the cause of the third estate.

He regretted the sympathy with which he read a work that perhaps more than any other touched the temper of the times: the

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1. Mémoire du clergé citoyen, en réponse aux attaques de la noblesse [S.l.n.d. Pp. 21]. See above, pp. .

momentous pamphlet by another clergyman, the Abbé Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyès, entitled Qu'est-ce que le tiers-état? In this essay, Sieyès adopted the viewpoint of a citizen of the third and argued that ninety-eight percent of the nation should be given its rightful due in the political order. Although he let fall no direct aspersions upon the clergy in this work, Sieyès called into question their status through his affirmation that only persons who could justify their place through performance of particular work or public functions--all equal men--merited a position in society. In effect, his criteria would negate the functions of all those clerics, as of all laity, that were deemed of little or no utility.

In January 1789, after the announcement of the Royal Decree of December which doubled the number of delegates of the third in the States-General, the curés of some regions--Brittany, Orléans, Lorraine, Bordeaux, Saintes--continued to follow the lead of the Dauphinois colleagues and organized to obtain within the delegation of the clerical order that same prominence won by their brethren in the third. Through their endeavors the curés came squarely into conflict with certain of their hierarchical superiors, and the old divisions between curé and bishop were deepened. In the face of this conflict, the curés of Dauphiné in a memorandum insisted upon the distinction between spiritual

and temporal obedience to the prelates. Advocating a policy which reflected the schizophrenic condition of allegiances that confronted the lower clergy, they wrote that the bishops were but citizens like the curés; with respect to civil or political matters their opinion need not bind the lower clergy. On matters of theology or the spiritual life, however, the prelates must be heeded for they were supreme in the hierarchy.

The best-documented and liveliest activities of the curés took place in Lorraine and involved such interesting personalities as the Abbé Henri Grégoire, later famous as head of the Constitutional Church; the Abbé Charles-Louis Guilbert, whose fame was confined to the region of Lorraine; and the Abbé Gabriel Mollevaut, Curé of the parish of Saint-Vincent-Saint-Fiacre of Nancy. Amongst the elaborate machinations that characterized the work of these leaders of the Lorraine curés, we see clearly that the active lower clergy had turned from occasional replies to critics and from vain pleas for amelioration of their lot in the hierarchy, both in terms of economics and of influence, to the hard realities of local organization in order to obtain representation at least equal to that of the higher clergy in the States. In their practical struggles in this respect, they increasingly maintained that they were citizens first, and only secondly priests. Without following Sieyès in his near-complete assumption of the optique of the commons, the curés who recorded their

ideas at this juncture tended to mingle the goals of the third with their own. Hence, they cast their eyes forward to the May meeting of the States-General in anticipation of an occasion when lower clergy and third estate would together endeavor to correct abuses in the clerical order while reforming the entire administration of the nation. The goals of patriot curés like the Abbés Grégoire, Jallet, or Morellet in the realm of clerical reform were of an egal-utilitarian nature and coincided with the stated aims of curés in general. In the temporal realm, thoughtful and literate curés like these three desired a reform of the social structure and suppression of privileges, convinced it would seem that such a reform in the direction of equality within the nation was in conformity with the law of Christ and that, as citizens, their duty was to work for it. Yet the mass of curés doubtless lingered behind their leaders in deciding upon the matter of allegiance. For the greater number of curés the problem probably remained unresolved. And even for the most patriotic of the lower clergy the decision as to what attitude to adopt on the question of Church property, continually menaced, appears to have still remained unanswered at the end of January 1789.

Engaged at first in a day-to-day struggle to organize and to win acceptance of the principle of equal representation in the electoral assemblies and, afterwards, when this goal was achieved through the generous electoral decree of 24 January

1789 permitting all curés to vote, employed in the natural endeavor to apply to the election of delegates the superiority of numbers which Necker's decree stipulated, those patriot curés who recorded their thoughts appear not to have realized what in retrospect the Abbé Morellet saw so clearly, viz. that the cardinal question upon which depended the future independence of the clergy was that of Church property. To the curés the problem comprised merely the renunciation of clerical tax privileges, a sacrifice that they would willingly make to gain the active championship of their cause by those potentially "generous protectors and useful patrons" of the third estate.

Nor do the lower clergy evince in their writings any cognizance of that great divergence which had been laid open by degrees between what appears as their own dominant view defining the present and future rôle of the priest in society and the one expressed by the most radical element amongst the writers of the third estate. To the extremist laity of the period clerical reform would commence with the withdrawal of the clergy from all temporal preoccupations and, as a first step, the Church would be stripped of its vast possessions. Afterwards, the independent position of the first estate as an order would be abolished and the clergy would be restricted to spiritual duties as salaried employees of the State. And although one rarely finds this entire program set down in a single work in the period from January

to April 1789, it is common enough to find parts of it here and there in the voluminous writings of the third estate. With the aid of hindsight, the historian sees in these ideas--in both their composite and fragmented forms--the outlines of what would become the reform program of the French Revolution.

Now, to challenge the right of the clergy, including the curés, to exercise temporal functions in society was to strike a direct blow at a vital section of the curés' arguments for their importance and utility as citizens in the French State with active civil status. In the course of this paper we have traced the development of the two-pronged curé position. We have observed that, taking confidence and inspiration from the popularized doctrines of Edmond Richer, the curés sought reform in the Catholic hierarchy designed to restore their place as subordinates only to the bishops in the administration of the Gallican Church. At the same time, we have suggested that the traditional temporal rôle of the French lower clergy had been reinforced under the Bourbon monarchy by practical extensions of the curés' functions as agents of royal administration. Sensitive to the long criticisms in the eighteenth century, first directly by independent-thinking bourgeois, then indirectly by those philosophes who maligned their adopted order, some curés in the fifteen-odd years prior to the Revolution formulated a concept of their place in society corresponding to that of a

combination social worker, moralist, and royal agent. Elements of this concept, moreover, were manifestly similar to ideas propounded by Voltaire and Rousseau in the context of a natural religion wherein the rightful functions and preoccupations of the lower clergy would comprise the practical and moral to the exclusion of the theological. Already popular by virtue of their reputation for honest charity and hard work, the curés in their writings sought to re-inforce their public image as useful public persons. For some curés, what we have described as the inherent tension of their equivocal position, was resolved through a firm declaration of allegiance with the third estate in the period after the Royal Decree of 24 January 1789; in such declarations, they insisted that they viewed themselves primarily as citizens. Henceforth, statements issued by curé groups like that of Orléans sought to convince the nation of the basic identification of interests between lower clergy and third estate. But, although the curés were welcomed into the fold by regional leaders of the third, some of whom had actively wooed the support of the priests, the basic incompatibility of the curés' view on their rôle in society with that of the extremist spokesmen of the third remained. And it is upon the projected plane of their utilitarian functions that the curés and the third clashed.

To judge by their writings, a principal goal of the ardent patriot and reformist curés was to win acceptance of their

utility in society and to establish the primacy of their rôle as citizens. The danger to them as to all of the clergy stemmed from men whose program for ecclesiastical reform included the seizure of Church property and the destruction of the independent position of the clergy in society. But the threat was not apparent to curés who gradually had become convinced that it was necessary to win recognition of their utility in a group under constant attack and who affirmed their dependence upon the joint efforts of the French monarch and the third estate to effect in the States-General the reform of a corps that would not reform itself.

Other thoughtful curés were more hesitant in the face of the problem of conflicting loyalties. To them the curés could not ignore that by their consecration they were members of the clergy, and primarily so. To their minds the position of the clergy amidst the controversy over privileges should be that of mediators for they insisted that the clergy served as pastors to the nobles as they did to the workmen and shepherds. This traditionalist and hedging solution was the one that prevailed during the early weeks of the States-General as the bulk of the clerical delegates groped for a final answer. But the patriots and the traditionalists alike, caught up in a complex of divided loyalties, long frustrations, and discontent with their order,

failed in these difficult months to perceive that the future of the French clergy was linked with the vast landed holdings they administered and that shrewd legal minds had long considered radical proposals for Church properties, parts of which, at least, were gaining in popular currency.

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IV. Pamphlets

Actes du synode, tenu à Toulouse au mois de novembre 1782 [Toulouse, de l'Imprimerie de noble J.A.H.M.B. Pijon, s.d. Pp. 182]. Includes Lettre de Monseigneur l'Archévêque de Toulouse [Etienne-Charles de Loménie de Brienne] aux curés de son diocèse [Toulouse, le 6 novembre 1781].
Brienne was one of the few prelates to convoke synods of his diocese; at this one he showed himself interested in the material welfare of the curés; the discussions reported in this tract also illustrate some of the divergences which separated the Jansenist-Richerists from other priests.
B.N. B 2399

Adresse à messieurs les curés [S.l., 1789. Pp. 30].
Written after 24 January 1789 and before elections--probably in February 1789; the pamphlet represents a strong appeal to curés to unite in coming elections and select men who will represent their best interests and, of course, not to elect unfriendly bishops; this work seems designed to incite a sort of class antagonism against the higher clergy; the tacit assumption is made by the author, who is probably a curé, that the curés are citizens and "of the people", that is, of the third estate; the work stands as a strong statement of the position that the curé is a citizen and, perhaps, primarily a citizen. B.H.V.P. 957036

A messieurs les curés de France, sur la tenue prochaine des Etats-Généraux [S.l.n.d. (1789). Pp. 11].
Written just prior to the elections to the States-General probably by a rather devout member of the third estate; bitterly anti-episcopal; emphasizes a type of class strife within the clergy between higher and lower ecclesiastics of hierarchy; the use of the term "ecclesiastics of the third estate" is characteristic of author's thinking that curés form a definite class and that they must unite to elect representatives to the States who will uphold their interests; also declares that they must insert in the cahiers their own demands; contains list of standard aims of lower clergy plus the unusual request for a National Council of Clergy to reform higher clergy and unify teachings of the Church.
B.H.V.P. 966820

A messieurs les curés du ressort du bailliage de Chalons-sur-Saone [S.l.n.d. Pp. 38].
Written just before the elections of the clergy at Chalons-sur-Saone, this pamphlet represents one of the strongest pleas for unity amongst the curés in the coming electoral assemblies; it strongly urges that only curés be elected to the States-General and that all of the lower clergy unite in supporting the third: "Men of the second order, let everyone take his place: you are drawn from the third estate and you should glorify yourself by remaining there!" (pp. 1-2).
B.S.P.-R. Rév. V, 10

A Monseigneur l'Archéveque d'Embrun, en Dauphiné [S.l., 1789. Pp. 14].
A sharp and incisive attack upon the Archbishop and his Mandement in which he protested against the doubling of the third and against the type of men (educated lawyers) elected to the States from the third in Dauphiné; written by member of the third a few months before the meeting of the States-General.
B.N. Lb39 1238; Duke Lib.

A MM. les curés lorrains et autres ecclésiastiques seculiers du diocèse de Metz [S.l.n.d. (22 janvier 1789). Pp. 4].
Signed: Grégoire, Curé d' Emberménil; Valentin, Curé de Leyri; Didry, Curé de Parroy.
This is a letter that accompanied copies of a speech made by M. Guilbert, Curé of Saint-Sebastian of Nancy, before the irregular assembly of the three orders held at Nancy on 20 janvier 1789; Guilbert demanded the election of a great number of curé deputies to the provincial States as well as to the States-General; this writing is an excellent example of the work of Grégoire and his curé colleagues in Lorraine to organize the lower clergy of that province; it also reveals the specific goals of the curés prior to 24 January 1789 and the feeling amongst many that they must act primarily in the present circumstances as citizens and secondly, as priests.
B.N. Lb39 1007

Arlequin reformateur dans la cuisine des moines, ou plan pour réprimer la gloutonnerie monacle, au profit de la nation épuisée par les brigandages de harpies financiéres; dédié à Monseigneur de Brienne, ex-principal ministre; Par l'auteur de la Lanterne Magique de la France. [S.l., 1789. Pp. 23].
On the title page is found the ironical statement: "Imprimé à Rome; avec permission et privilège du Pape." A work of invective written to discredit the monastic system.

Arrêt de conseil d'état du roi, concernant les droits, franchises, et immunités du clergé; extrait des registres du conseil d'état du 5 juillet 1788 [S.l.n.d. Pp. 7]. ["Signé Le B. Breteuil" (p. 7.)].
The Arret states that the king recognizes the clergy's immunity from the vingtième.
B.H.V.P. 967898

Arrêté du chapitre général des capucins tenu extraordinairement en juin 1788 [S.l.n.d. Pp. 14].
Mock-serious satire in which the chapter disagrees with a good portion of the Remonstrances du clerge au Roi, submitted by Assembly of Clergy in 1788; in particular, it cannot support the condemnation of the reform of the courts (by Brienne); nor can it agree to meddle in any of the king's business.
B.N. Ld4 3050

Aux Etats-Généraux; recueil des différens principes qui constituent la liberté de l'homme et d'un gouvernement régi par de bonnes lois; suivi d'une discussion des priviléges, des prérogatives, et des usages que le clergé et la noblesse présentent comme des principes constitutifs de la monarchie [S.l., "Imprimé au Temple de la Vérité," 1789. Pp. 119].
Hodgepodge of revolutionary ideas; influence of Rousseau and Montesquieu is clear; attacks privileges of clergy and nobility; preaches individual liberty; written early in 1789.
B.H.V.P. 951985

Avis fraternel à MM. du moyen et bas clergé de toutes les provinces [S.l.n.d. Pp. 16].
The writer, doubtless an ecclesiastic, complains of certain portions of the king's regulations for the clerical section of the States of Dauphiné; lightly anti-episcopal written late in 1788.
B.N. Ld4 3056

Avis de l'Eglise à ses enfants [S.l.n.d. Pp. 24].
Satire written probably by lay writer in the months just before meeting of States-General (March-April 1789).
B.N. Ld4 6061

Barruel, Abbé Augustin.
Le Patriote véridique, ou discours sur les vraies causes de la révolution actuelle [Paris, 1789. Pp. 132].
This work first appeared in the form of articles in the Journal Ecclésiastique beginning in January 1789; internal evidence indicates that it was completed before the events of June-July 1789; in absolutist tradition that favored alliance of king with third.
B.N. Lb39 2715

Bref de notre saint père le Pape, au clergé de l'église gallicane [S.l. 1789. Pp. 19]. On the title page: "De l'Imprimerie du Vatican." An ironical letter of the Pope employed as a vehicle to satirize the Church and the gallican clergy: "We hereby notify you that we are sending by the present courier two trunks filled with red hats . . . destined for those of you who hold firm in the Assembly . . ." (p. 19). Written just prior to the States-General.

Cahier de doléances et remontrances du clergé de Paris, intra muros, dans la séance du 18 Mai [Paris, C. L. Simon impr., 1789. Pp. 31].
B.H.V.P. 965440

Cahier du clergé de bailliage de S . . . . [S.l., 12 avril 1789. Pp. 96].
Introductory note states the clergy of the bailliage forbade publication of its cahier, but that a deputy of the States took the liberty to do this. The cahier does not correspond with any of those published under the letter "S" in the Archives; however, in the list of those cahiers lacking at time of publication is found that of the clergy of the bailliage of Senlis, whose five completing letters correspond exactly with the five dots that denote the missing letters of the place name.

Catalogue des ouvrages relatifs aux Etats-Généraux qui ont paru depuis l'arret du mois de juillet 1788 [S.l.n.d. Pp. 59].
A list of only a few titles; work contains also Première suite du catalogue des ouvrages relatifs aux Etats-Généraux qui ont paru depuis le 25 mars 1788. [S.l.n.d. Pp. 36].
B.N. Lb39 7072

Catéchisme des curés auvergnats amis de leur patrie, de leur roi, et de leurs frères [S.l., 1789. Pp. 131].
Mild reform work instructing deputies of Auvergne; role of curés in present conflicts should be that of mediators; written prior to redaction of cahier of clergy in Auvergne, hence about March 1789.
B.N. Lb39 1374

Ce qu'il faut dire, ou lettre d'un curéde campagne à un de ses amis, a l'occasion de ce qui s'est passé dans la chambre du clergé, à l'Assemblée du bailliage principal de Dijon, et de

ses baillaiages secondaires [S.l. 20 avril 1789. Pp. 15]. Accuses the "anti-patriotic" party of several moves to limit strength of the curés during the meeting at Dijon; one stratagem, he declares, was to postpone voting on most issues in the hope that, with Easter approaching, the curé delegates would leave the meeting to care for their parishes, and that major decisions could thus be taken without them.
B.N. Lb39 7130

Chacun son mot, ou idées sur l'ordre du clergé dans l'assemblée des Etats-Généraux [Rome, 1789. Pp. 18]. (Title page missing in B.H.V.P.'s copy)
Voltairean type essay against the clergy; emphasizes the uselessness of clerical profession in relation to other professions; argues, following Voltaire, that clergy should not constitute a separate ordre in the Nation or in the States-General; written early in 1789 by a lay writer.
B.N. Lb39 1014; B.H.V.P. 950501

Circulaire adressée au nom du directeur général des finances, enjoignant aux curés du royaume d'envoyer le tableau de la population de leurs paroisses respectives pendant l'année 1779; datée du 14 décembre 1780, et commencant par ces mots etc. [Paris, 14 décembre 1780. Incomplete.].
B.N. Ld4 3024

Conduite du clergé [S.l.n.d. Pp. 4].
Written after opening of the States-General--perhaps 27 mai 1789 as indicated on the copy in the B.N.; author is probably of lower clergy; expresses the desire of certain curés to unite with the third in renouncing their pecuniary privileges.
B.N. Lb39 1376

Conférence entre un bénéficier et un fermier-général [S.l., 1789. Pp. 22].
Light satire to expose worst qualities of abbés and farmers-general; written early in 1789.
B.H.V.P. 957797

Conseils au clergé de Provence [S.l., 28 Decembre 1788. Pp. 27].
On frontispiece of copy in BHVP. is found written: "Par Mr. Servan." The work is attributed by Barbier to Antoine-Joseph-Michel Servan.
This pamphlet concerns the coming States-General of Provence; it calls for certain changes in the electoral rules to give greater representation to the curés.
B.H.V.P. 966093

Considérations sur les gouvernemens, et principalement sur celui qui convient à la France, par M. Mounier [Paris, 1789. Pp. 54]. By Jean-Joseph Mounier. The concept of two chambers in Parliament with a Constitutional Monarch is clearly set forth.

Conversation entre le révérend pére en Dieu Monseigneur A, et le révérend pére en Dieu, Monseigneur B, par la miséricorde de Dieu et la grace du Saint-Siége Apostolique, Evêque de . . . et de . . . en France [S.l.n.d. Pp. 31].
Mock-serious satire in form of dialogue between two bishops whose desire is to protect their positions and cause the plans for the States to miscarry; written probably in November-December of 1788.
B.N. Ld4 3051

Cordier de Saint-Firmin, L'Abbé.
Doléances de l'exorciste du diocése de Paris, pour les Etats-Généraux de 1789 [S.l.n.d. Pp. 14].
A minor cleric writes this vague and vapid tract to deplore the lost position of religion without offering any remedies or any concrete ideas to restore the prestige of the Catholic Church; composed between January and April 1789.
B.N. Lb39 1564

Crimes et forfaits de la noblesse et du clergé depuis le commencement de la monarchie jusqu'à nos jours [Paris, n.d. Pp. 148].
Three known editions of this work exist: (1) the edition above found at the B.H.V.P. 951277 and the B.N. Lb39 769 (A); (2) [Paris, s.d. Pp. 164.], in the B.N. Lb39 769; (3) [Paris, s.d. Pp. 164 plus vi], in the B.N. Lb39 769 (B).
Written in the early months of 1789 by a lay writer, this work is a type of historical review taken doubtless from Fleury or some other historian and interpreted in accord with author's thesis, which is that from a "collection of facts" it can be shown that during centuries past the nobility and clergy have been "constantly the cruelest enemies of our kings and of our people;" advocates sweeping reforms in first estate including confiscation of Church property; the tone of the work is given by the cutting definition of the clergy; "Le clergé n'est exactement qu'une corporation de trés-mauvais maîtres d'école et de morale, payés excessivement cher par la nation pour excercer des fonctions dont ce clergé s'est déchargé sur les curés auxquelles ils refusent presque le nécessaire . . . ." (p. 161).
B.H.V.P. 951277

Décadence des parlements, du clergé et de la noblesse [S.l., 1789. Pp. 30].
Written early in 1789; implores third not to be frightened by prospect of opposing the nobility and the clergy to demand equality of taxation; declares that the conditions of third could not deteriorate as a result; lay writer.
Lb39 1059 and Br. Mus. Rév. Fr. Vol 13; Etats-Généraux, Vol. 1.

Défense de l'"Essai historique sur l'origine des dîmes," à M. l'Abbé Ghesquiére [Liége, 1785. Pp. 8]. [By Outrepont].
Author defends his original work against criticisms; see also Lettre de l'auteur de l' "Essai historique sur l'origine

des dimes" [Bruxelles, 19 janvier 1781].
B.N. Ld4 3034

De la noblesse et des moines; par le Comte L .... de G .... [S.l., 1789. Pp. 22].
Project for reform of the nobility and the monastic orders; states belief that many persons in the orders are victims of family arrangements and that they are there against their wish--a popular, if perhaps incorrect, idea of the day (and one used with good effect by the modern playwright Georges Bernanos in his work Dialogues of a Carmelite).
B.N. Lb39 1057

De l'esprit du clergé dans les Etats-Généraux; essai suivi de quelques observations sur le Mémoire des Princes [S.l., 1789. Pp. 23].
A lay writer charges the clergy with hiding their plans, with intriguing to protect their property; doubtless written in late December 1788 or January 1789.
B.H.V.P. 968422 and Br. Mus., R.F. Vol. 20; E.-G., noblesse et clergé

Déliberation de l'Assemblée Nationale, du mercredi 17 juin 1789 [S.l.n.d. Pp. 6].
Famous meeting during which the name "National Assembly" was adopted.
B.S.P.-R. Rév. I, 3

Délibération d'un chapitre de l'église gallicane, sur les immunités du clergé [En Provence, 1789. Pp. 22].
Ironical meeting of clergy of cathedral chapter; general satire against bishops and chanoines their greed, licentiousness, etc.

Déliberations à prendre pour les assemblées de bailliages.
This work was published in the brochure entitled: Instruction donnée par S.A.A. Monseigneur le Duc d'Orleans, à ses représentans aux bailliages [S.l., 1789. Pp. 67].
The Déliberations are the work of Sieyès and were written in February 1789 according to Chassin; the pamphlet does indeed have the ring of Sieyès' Qu'est-ce que le Tiers Etat? as well as the characteristic souci de détail of the Abbé; see especially pp. 5, 17.
B.N. Lb39 1380 C

Déliberations qui ont précédés les conférences; déliberations du clergé [Paris, chez Baudoin, Imprimeur de l'Assemblée Nationale, 1789. Pp. 216].
Signed Hebert, Sec'y of Conference. This tract is important because it traces the story of the Conciliatory Commission in detail; the meetings of the Commission began 23 May 1789.
B.S.P.-R. Rév. III, 5

Dernière réclamation du clergé de France au roi [S.l., "De l'Imprimerie Patriote," n.d. Pp. 48].
Probably by lay writer before States-General; a mildly reformist work, a sort of catch-all of conventional ideas; contains interesting statement on public opinion: "The first task of a wise administration is thus to manage the dominant opinions in a country, because the opinions are the dearest property of a people; they are even dearer to them than their life and fortune." (p. 14).
B.H.V.P. 955176

Deuxième lettre à M. le Comte de . . . [S.l.n.d. Pp. 82].
Clerical author of this work argues that corruption within clergy has been exaggerated; that distinctions of birth and rank are not made in Church, that, on contrary, all clergy are equal; his argument here, however, seems to be that of the historical Church and not that of actual one; he admits that richest bénéfices go to les Grands, but states that this does not mean that ecclesiastical wealth has ceased to be a part of the public patrimony, that even if all abuses leveled against clergy were true this would not deprive the public of its patrimony over ecclesiastical wealth. Probably written late in 1788.
B.H.V.P. 964763

Development d'une ressource immense et légitime, pour la régénération de l'état, l'acquittement de sa dette, l'abolition de la gabelle, et autres droits onéreux; par le Marquis de la Salle d'Offement [S.l., 1789. Pp. 61].
Comprehensive plan for reform of the State and the Church; proposes among other things to confiscate the property of the regular clergy. Written just prior to the States-General.

Dialogue entre l'Archéveque de Paris et le vicaire de huit sols [S.l., 1789. Pp. 16].
Ironical dialogue between lowly vicaire and great Archbishop of Paris in which the latter is teased and mocked. Written after 24 June 1789; see page 5: reference to Archbishop's carriages being overturned by an angry mob which occurred 24 June according to Biographie Universel, Vol. 22, p. 114, article 'Le Clerc de Juigné'; and La Grande Encyclopédie, Vol. 21, p. 281.

Dialogue entre un curé, un chanoine de cathédrale, son curé primatif, et un philosophe [S.l.n.d. Pp. 15].
A work that echoes some of the bitterness of the struggle between the curés primatifs and the clergy who possessed the curés; written probably late in 1788 by a member of the lower clergy; a mild propaganda piece for the lower clergy.

Diogène aux Etats-Généraux [S.l., 1789. Pp. 15].
Banal vehicle to urge Louis to carry out reforms in States-General; written a few months after opening of States.
B.H.V.P. 957952

Discours prononcé à l'ouverture des états de Languedoc, par Monseigneur l'Archeveque de Narbonne [S.l., 1789. Pp. 12].

Discours prononcé par M. l'Abbé de Poix, Archidiacre de l'Eglise, Comte de Lyon, au nom de tout le clergé; le 19 mars 1789, en remerciment de la députation envoyée le 16 mars, au clergé, par l'assemblée de tiers-état [S.l., 19 mars 1789. Pp. 4].
The position of the Abbé is of interest: the clergy are willing to renounce their fiscal privileges but, viewed historically, their privileges were till now a barrier to the absolute power of the monarchy; moreover, if the clergy and nobility had shown themselves more docile in accepting the impositions which were commanded, then perhaps this epoch of reconquered rights of Frenchmen would not have arrived (that is, the Revolution).
Br. Mus., Rév. Fr. 331; l'Eglise II, No. 6.

Discours prononcé par M. l'évêque . . . a l'ouverture des Etats-Généraux [S.l.n.d. Pp. 70].
This is not the speech of La Fare, Bishop of Nancy, but is a spurious account which appeared soon after the sermon of the Bishop at the opening of the States-General 4 May 1789.

Doléances de la paroisse de . . . . . auxquelles ont adhéré un grand nombre de curés, de prêtres et d'habitants du Bailliage d'Evreux . . . [S.l.n.d. Pp. 29].
In the Bibliothèque de la Société du Port-Royal the copy of this pamphlet, formerly in the possession of the Abbe Grégoire, contains the word "Crétinville" written in as the name of the parish and in the handwriting of Grégoire. The complaints of the parish represent, however, rather standard and innocuous demands for reform; the work seems to have been written late in 1788 as a general response to the decree of 5 July requesting information and suggestions.
B.S.P.-R., Rév. IV, 8.

Doléances du clergé du second ordre [S.l.n.d. Pp. 32].
Written after 18 février 1789 (see p. 30) and after June of the elections to States-General but before the meeting of the States; a sincere program for

reform of the Church but with bitter attacks on the nobility and prelates; favors an alliance between the third estate and the curés to limit the power of the nobility and to confer the power on the States and the king; the lot of the lower clergy and the people "has always been more or less unhappy according as the authority of the Crown was more or less limited by Les Grands, ecclesiastic or lay." (p. 5).
Lb39 1210

Droit exclusif des curés aux dixmes de leurs paroisses, ou lettre à M. de Gr....., pour être presentée à l'Assemblée Generale des états de la nation; par un curé d'Anjou [S.l.n.d. Pp. 83].
Written in November-December 1788; rather moderate work that argues gently the case of the curés versus the bishops on the tithe question; discussion is tenuous if erudite; tone is not anti-prelate in general; protests against current talk of confiscating Church property.
B.N. Lb39 1211

Droit de réprésentation à l'Assemblée Nationale des curés [Nancy, 25 janvier 1789. Pp. 3].
No title page; title of work was written in by the Abbé Grégoire in the copy now found in the Bibliothèque de la Société du Port Royal; the letter is signed "the curés of Nancy."
This tract cites an earlier circular letter calling for a General Assembly in Nancy for "the formation and organization of our Provincial States." The project set forth in the earlier work calls for curés and other secular clergy to have in this assembly as many representatives as the higher clergy, which "comprises besides the bishops, the abbots, priors, chapters, etc."
The Droit de réprésentation was written soon after the first assembly in the form of another circular letter; it reviews the work of the assembly, notes the resolution by the Curé of Saint-Sebastian at Nancy to pay taxes on an equal basis, and pleads for unity behind the resolutions of the assembly.
B.S.P.R. Rév. V, 3

Encore quatre cris, ou sermon d'un patriote; à prononcer par M. l'Abbé F.... dans la chaire de quelque district [Paris, 1789. Pp. 44].
According to Barbier, the patriote was Aubert de Vitry and the abbé was Fauchet.

Essai historique sur l'origine des dîmes, pour parvenir à l'examen de la question: Si les décimateurs ont leur intention fondée en droit pour exiger la dîme des fruits

nouveaux [S.l., 1780. Pp. 114]. [By Outrepont, d' après Barbier].
Author attempts to show, among other things, that tithes do not have their origin in divine law; includes an historical aperçu of tithes since Charlemagne; see also Lettre de l'auteur de "Essai historique sur l'origine des dimes" in which same writer answers several criticisms of his original work.
B.N. Ld4 3025

Extrait de ce qui s'est passé dans la chambre de l'ordre du clergé, à l'assemblée générale du bailliage principal d'Evreux, dont l'ouverture s'est faite le 16 de mars, dans l'église cathédrale d'Evreux; M. l'Eveque d'Evreux, Président, assisté de Monsiegneur l'Eveque de Lisieux [S.l., 1789. Pp. 20].
Significant as a testimony at Evreux of willingness of clergy and nobility to share tax burden.
B.H.V.P. 955173

Extrait des déliberations et arreté des curés d'Orléans, relativement à la convocation des Etats-Généraux [S.l.n.d. (28 janvier 1789) Pp. 23].
Tone of this work is optimistic as to the results expected of the States-General; favors an all-out alliance with the third estate; declares that curés are citizens before being priests.
B.N. Lb39 1028

Fauchet, L'Abbé. De la religion nationale [Paris, Bailly, 1789. Pp. 8].
B.N. Lb 39 1763

Fragment d'une prophétie traduite d'un manuscript hébreu, récément découvert sous les ruines d'Ecbatane [S.l. n.d. Pp. 8].
Mock prophecy of disorders that shall reign in the kingdom; predicts that king will call Necker to solve problems: noble families will be banished, ecclesiastical property confiscated; then peace will be restored; written about end of 1788.
B.N. Lb39 1063

Gaultier de Biauzat, J.-F. Doléances sur les surcharges que les gens du peuple supportent en toute espèce d'impots [S.l., 1788. Pp. 288].
Author is "Avocat au Parlement, Membre du Conseil nommé par l'Assemblée Provinciale d'Auvergne." See, especially Chap. XIX, entitled "Contributions de Clergé," for legal criticism of Church finances.

Haranque patriotique de l'orateur sans souci, prononcée en présence des trois ordres, à l'ouverture des Etats-Généraux [Versailles, de l'Imprimerie des Etats, 1789. Pp. 45].
Little specific concern for clergy of religion; yet a revolutionary call by members of third for political reform; echoes most of general reform demands and adds a few new ones; written very soon after opening of States 4 May 1789.
B.H.V.P. 958415

Haro sur la f..... des b..... [feuille des bénéfices], par Thomas-Guillaume B.E.R. [Berenger de Hauterive], secrétaire de feu Mons. de Jar.... [Jarente][G renoble, l'an de justice 1789. Pp. 50].
Purports to be by T.-G. Berenger (Berenger's name is written on frontispiece of copy at the B.N.) and his authorship is probable; attacks extreme wealth of the bishops in declaring that clergy is supposed to possess from one-sixth to one-twelfth of the property in the kingdom and, of this, the bishops hold about three-fourths; the causes of evil in the Church have their source in the inevitable abuses of wealth and power that result from this for the intention of the founders of ecclesiastical wealth was not to enrich such a small number of men; no body needs reform as badly as does the Church; the reform of the Church should be associated with that of the State and carried out with equal force and thoroughness upon the same model as that of the State; favors restricting power of the bishops and permitting the localities of the clergy to govern themselves through synods and with benefice-holders chosen from lists submitted to the king by the synods.
B.N. Lb39 1482

Hommage à l'humanitié; dénonciation au gouvernment et Etats-Généraux sur l'abus du pouvoir temporel des éveques de France [S.l., 1789. Pp. 53].
Probably written by a lay outhor interested in clerical reform just prior to meeting of States-General; denounces wealth of the bishops as well as their meddling in political affairs, which the author believes is done to increase their political power and hence their fortunes; intensely pro-curé, especially bemoans the lot of the rural curé.
B.N. Lb39 1214

Injustice des prétentions du clergé et de la noblesse [S.l., 1789. Pp. 29].
A stringently anti-clerical (and anti-noble) work by a member of the third; written in January 1789 (see page

20 for reference to troubles raging in Brittany); the author would confiscate all Church property, eliminate the clergy as an order, give to the State the appointment of all ecclesiastics and salary them; he states that the clergy have lost their right to the wealth through moral abuses and extravagance; marriage, for one thing, would purify the morals of the clergy.
B.N. Lb39 1058

Instruction des curés du diocèse de d'Angers à leurs députés aux Etats-Généraux, rédigées par un curé du diocèse d'Angers [S.l., 1789. Pp. 22].
Signed "F. F., curé de H."
Proposals for meeting financial crisis are moderate to the point of unreasonableness; reforms proposed for clergy are the standard ones, e.g. residence of bishops, reduction of number of abbeys, etc. with the exception of the unusual proposal to provide all country curés with two domestic servants and a horse.
B.N. Lb39 1375

Instruction donnée par S.A.S. Monseigneur le Duc d'Orléans, à ses représentans aux bailliages [S.l., 1789. Pp. 67].
See Déliberations à pour les assemblées de bailliages [attributed to Sieyès].
B.N. Lb39 1380 C

Jallet, L'Abbé Jacques. Mémoire sur la calamité de 1785.
[Essay published by Le Commandant Marie in an article entitled "L'Abbé Jallet sur la disette de 1785-1786," (Pointiers, 1959), reprinted from the Bulletin de la Société des Antiquaires de l'Ouest, tome V, série 4].
Writing in 1785 on the famine of that year, the Abbé Jallet set forth ideas which reflected, among other things, his concern for the administration of Church wealth and for the attacks which its administration had engendered amongst the populace.
B.N. Ld4 11440

L'Abbé, j'ai rendu vos neuf francs, moins trente sous; par M. le C..... de M... (le Comte de Mirabeau) [S.l.n.d (1789), Pp. 7].
Mirabeau declares that he is refunding 7 livres 10 to all subscribers; see Rendez-nous nos deuf francs; par M. l'Abbé . . . [S.l.n.d. Pp. 4].
Lb39 1702

[Laborie, l'Abbé]. Questions sur la réforme du clergé, proposées à la chambre du clergé de la sénéchaussée de Nimes; à nosseigneurs de l'Assemblée Nationale [Versailles, Baudoin, s.d. Pp. 14].
B.N. Lb39 1762

La France renaissante ou conduite admirable des princes de l'Eglise; ils convertissent les nobles et les richards inhumains. Signé Lebois [(Paris), De l'Impr. de Ballard, rue des Mathurins, et se vend rue de la Parcheminèrie, no. 28-9, s.d. Pp. 7].
A somewhat enigmatic writing attacking excesses of prelates in light, ironic manner; the theme seems to be that for France, as for all things, union brings force, and disunion brings weakness; probably written in last months of 1788.
B.H.V.P. 951725; B.N. Lb39 1876

La galerie des Etats-Généraux [S.l., 1789. Vol. I: Pp. 130; Vol. II: Pp. 172].
Satire drawn upon the major personalities of the States-General giving them titles from classic antiquity with Necker as Narsès, Mirabeau as Iramba, Talleyrand as Amère, etc.; written about June 1789.
B.S.P.R. Rév. 278 (1, 2)

La libération de l'état, et le bonheur du peuple; projet d'un impot uniforme, substitué à tous les tributs dont les Francois sont accablés, et dont le produit donnera à la France 800,000,000 l., c'est à dire près de 300,000,000 l. de plus que la recette ordinaire, sans augmenter cependant le fardeau de peuple . . . par M. Lanchamp, advocat stagiare du Parlement de Paris [Paris, 1789. Pp. 76].
Written just prior to the meeting of the States General.

La liberté, ou la France régénérée; poème; par M. l'Abbé de Cournand, lecteur et professeur royale de littérature française [Liege, 1789. Pp. 20].
An ode to liberty and unity in France.

L'ami de la paix, ou lettre d'un curé, membre de l'Assemblée Nationale, à ses paroissiens, au sujet des troubles affligent sa province [S.l.n.d. Pp. 24].
Author is given as Delfau, Curé de Daglan, but he has not been identified; concern with local affairs makes the work difficult to date but probably late in 1789.
B.N. Lb39 2164

La paillardise ecclésiastique ou Les R... des C... [S.l.n.d.].
Attacks morals of clergy, especially the bishops; written in 1788; see same work under title of: Les roup..tes des calotins [S.l.n.d. Pp. 8].
B.N. Lb39 6847

La poule au pot [S.l., janvier 1775. Pp. 30].
Comprehensive plan of fiscal and administrative reform; contains suggestion that the king take the Church's wealth and pay the salaries of the clergy himself--readjusting them more equitably.

La première aux grands, ou suite du Fanal [S.l., 1789. Pp. 29].
Banal attack on nobility and clergy; takes standard and oft-repeated line that clergy should not meddle in political affairs for their kingdom is not of this world; written by member of the third estate not long before the decree of 29th December 1788 which doubled the representation of the third.
B.H.V.P. 966205

La réforme du clergé à proposer aux Etats-Généraux, par l'abbé Brottier [S.l., 1789. Pp. 30].
Thoroughgoing statement for reform of the clergy containing the radical declaration: "There ought not to be any distinctions in the House of the Lord." Written probably in February-March 1789.

L'aristocratie enchainée et surveillée par le roi et par le peuple; aristocratie des provinces; seconde édition. Premier cahier, contenant un plan de constitution des provinces; suivi d'un mémoire de MM. les barons nés des états de Languedoc, et la réponse à leurs prétentions. Par M.J.L.G.S. [S.l., 1er mars 1789. Pp. 75].
A mild anti-episcopal work. Bound with it in one volume in Bibliothéque Nationale is L'aristocratie enchainée. Second cahier; contenant l'état actuel du clergé de France; second édition [S.l., 10 mars 1789. Pp. 50]. This is a false title; the real one being Doléances du clergé du royaume dressées par M. l'abbé S....., vicaire-général de Chalons-sur-Marne, correspondant de l'Académie des Inscriptions de Paris. Favors curés over bishops; advocates mild reforms within hierarchy.

L'aristocratie enchainée; second cahier contenant l'état actuel du clergé de France [second édition, s.l., 10 mars 1789. Pp. 48].
Examines causes of disrespect for clergy and decline of ecclesiastical discipline; sets forth a plan of reform within the Church.
Duke Library

L'Assemblée de Sorbonne ou l'histoire des Etats-Généraux de l'église [S.l.n.d. Pp. 31 plus (copy imperfect)].
Written in 1789 just prior to the States General.

La voix dans le désert, ou motion des corps religieux [S.l., 1789. Pp. 15].
Author purports to be a monk; he admits deplorable condition of regular clergy and need of reform therein; offers nation a sum of 50 millions as first step; early 1789.

La voix du prêtre [Utrecht, chez Chrysostome mis- au-mitre, à la verité, 1750. Pp. 69].
Written by the Abbé Ducas Constantin, according to Barbier, and also the author of the pamphlet Réflexions d'un curé l'administration des biens de l'Eglise [S.l.n.d. (1789); B.N. Lb39 1055].
A very harsh work against the bishops; furthermore, it favors the clergy's paying the vingtième.
B.N. Ld4 2313

L'Ecclésiastique citoyen, ou lettres sur les moyens de rendre les personnes, les établissements et les biens de l'Eglise encore plus utile à l'état et même à la religion [Londres, 1785. Pp. 480].
By same author as Observations sur la répartition des biens ecclésiastique, et particulièrement des dimes [Bruxelles, 1781. Pp. 68[(B.N. Ld4 3026); long and trenchant attack upon wealthy holders of benefices and upon possession of tithes by others than curés; bitterness shown by author, who is a curé, against abbots, priors, chanoines, who, by virtue of their wealth are highly considered in the world whereas the curés are regarded merely as their servants; only within the hierarchy do the curés hold a rank that requires respect; argues for restoration of tithes to curés; declares that 40,000 curés represent a more valuable force for maintenance of order in kingdom than 300,000 troops of army; at moment, refuses to defend clergy from philosophe attacks for non-utility; cites agreement by philosophes that position of curé should be raised; scores bishops for considering that curés are persons "condemned to mediocrity." (p. 49).
B.N. Ld4 3037

Le clergé soumis à la corvée par les loix du royaume [S.l.n.d. Pp. 26].
This work by a lay writer argues that the clergy should pay the corvée, or levy for the upkeep of roads and bridges, but the lay writer admits the general tax exemption of the first estate; no key given to date but probably written in 1788.
B.N. Lb39 1053

Le cri des nations [S.l., 1769. Incomplete]. [By Voltaire].
Trenchant and lucid attack on papal power and, particularly, on Pius V, author of Bull Incoena Domini; gives characteristic tone of philosophe writings against Catholic religion.
B.N. Ld4 3000

Le Deo Gratias [S.l.n.d. Pp. 7].
Vague anti-noble, anti-clerical work hinting at a clerico-noble conspiracy; probably written early in 1789.
B.H.V.P. 951716 and B.N. Lb39 7522

Le "De Profundis" de la noblesse et du clergé [S.l., 1789. Pp. 30].
Written on title page of B.H.V.P.'s copy: "16 février 1789."
Written before elections to States-General; author is of third estate; work is supposedly a clerical complaint about threats to its privileges and property; actually, no doubt, this pamphlet was designed to put privileged classes in a bad light through a frivolous treatment of claims of the third to equality; concerning Church the usual themes -- the simplicity, and humility of the primitive Church, the need to return to Biblical principles -- are stressed.
B.H.V.P. 958499

Le Mea Culpa du clergé, ou les frères capucins appellés aux Etats-Généraux [Paris, 1789. Pp. 46].
A series of letters wherein different capucin brothers offer reasons why their particular order should be protected and preserved. Written early in 1789.
B.H.V.P. 957755

Le moine citoyen; par Dom Patriote [S.l., 1789. Pp. 19].
Apocryphal work by lay writer; argues that despite diminished revenues the regular clergy are subject to tax as citizens; written January-March 1789; would tax higher clergy and monasteries but not lower clergy.
B.N. Lb39 1046; Duke Library

Le pasteur égaré [S.l.n.d. (23 mai 1789). Pp. 15].
Request that the Bishop of Rennes, Msgr. Bareau de Girac, be allowed to return to Rennes under protection.
Lb39 1726

Le pape, le grand clergé de France chassés du paradis terrestre, par le père eternal [S.l.n.d. Pp. 8].
Written in first few months of 1789; a somewhat insipid satire against clergy, and especially against higher clergy, by member of third estate.
B.H.V.P. 956794

Le point de ralliement des citoyens français, sur les bases d'une constitution nationale et sur pouvoirs des députés [S.l., 1789. Pp. 33].
By the Abbé Brun, d'après Barbier; author urges all French to use the example of the success of the States of Dauphiné as inspiration as to what can be performed in the

States-General toward obtaining a National Constitution.
B.N. Lb39 1285

Le premier coup de griffe aux renards noirs, ou la précaution qui n'est pas inutile [Paris, rue du Hurepoix, No. 24, 1789. Pp. 19].
Light satire of anti-clerical substance.
B.N. Lb39 1049

Le réveil d'un grand roi [S.l., 1789. Pp. 11].
Written after opening of States-General but before union of three orders on 22 June 1789; work is a plea for three orders to unite; author dreams he is Louis XVI who issues orders for unification.
B.H.V.P. 951097

Le saut périlleux ou le clergé chassé du paradis terrestre [S.l., 1789. Pp. 8].
Anticlerical; condemns prelates for their pride; probably written before March 1789.
Duke Library

Les curés de Dauphiné, à leurs confrères les recteurs de Bretagne [S.l., 1789. Pp. 25].
Written after 8 January 1789 and probably during the revolt at Rennes in that month, this pamphlet is an important propaganda-document aimed at developing the esprit de corps of the curés in Brittany and elsewhere against the bishops and the nobles. The curés of Dauphiné urge those of Brittany to follow their example and refuse support to those bishops who are despotic: "If they are good citizens, they will make a common cause with the people; if they are infested with the principles of tyranny, do not listen to them." (p. 3). This writing emphasizes emphatically the common interest between the third estate and the curés: "How do you expect to obtain any consideration so long as you are but the pastors of a flock of slaves...; you shall not obtain the plentitude of your rights until the time that the people obtain theirs." (p. 11).
B.N. Lb39 1241

Les dialogues sans fin; le casque et la mitre [S.l.n.d. Pp. 32].
Rather insipid satire in the form of a dialogue; embodies many current ideas of an anti-clerical, anti-noble nature; by lay writer probably late in 1789.
B.N. Lb39 1061

Le secret dévoilé, dialogue entre l'évêque Y et l'abbé Z [S.l., 1789. Pp. 53].
Written before 19th June by lay writer; anticlerical tract in form of a dialogue.
B.N. Lb39 1822

Le septième commandement de l'Eglise [S.l.n.d. Pp. 16].
Written by non-cleric after opening of States-General (see p. 3); calls for a clerical synod to pass a seventh commandment to order people not to believe the lies of charlatans of the day who excite the populace by false claims.
B.H.V.P. 957309

Les Etats-Généraux ou nécessité du consentement de la Nation pour autoriser les emprunts [S.l.n.d. Pp. 30].
Legalistic argument that King can not borrow further without convoking the States. Written between May and August 1788. (See page 2 for reference to decree of 8 May 1788).

Les Heureuses prédictions de J..... Bte Nic..M.... D'Orivelle [Paris, 1789. Pp. 20].
Before States-General; rather ordinary reform work by lay author; would abolish all monasteries except those concerned with education; denounces prelates, praises curés.
B.H.V.P. 955833

Les malheurs actuels prédits par le prophète Isaïe et le célèbre Fenelon, ou extrait du Mandement de Monseigneur l'Arch-Évêque de Lyon, du 28 janvier 1789, sur l'exemplaire imprimé à Lyon, avec des notes selon le mérits de l'ouvrage [S.l., 1789. Pp. 8].
Appears to be a serious work with extracts from the real Mandement.
B.N. Lb39 1031

Les principes du gouvernement, simplifiés et reduits à sept unités naturelles [S.l.n.d. Pp. 122].
Lay author, partisan of Count of Mirabeau, urges extensive reforms of state, including sale of King's lands as well as those of clergy and of Order of Malta; written late in 1788 or early 1789.
B.N. Lb39 769 [2]

Les roup..tes des calotins [S.l.n.d. Pp. 8].
See La paillardise ecclésiastique ou les R... des C... [S.l.n.d. Pp. 8].
B.N. Lb39 6846

Les sept péchés capitaux, ou Examples tirés de l'état ecclésiastique, occupant actuellement le clergé de France; par un ex-ci-devant-soi-disant J...., et copié littéralement par un homme qui s'amuse de tout [Paris, chez le Prieur de l'Abbaye Saint-Germain-des-Près, et chez le Suisse du Nonce du Pape, rue Saint-Dominique, 1789. Pp. 50].

Somewhat blasphemous treatise on the seven capital sins of the clergy (Pride, Avarice, Gourmandise, Luxury, Envy, Anger, Laziness); the brunt of the satire is directed against the episcopacy.
B.N. Réserve Lb39 1765

Le tribun du peuple, au peuple [Paris, 1788. Pp. 42].
Commonplace work of anticlerical, antifeudal nature; incites people to demand what they want and not to listen to the counsels of clergy to be quiet and calm.
B.H.V.P. 968260

Le triomphe de l'aristocratie, ou preuves des droits du clergé et de la noblesse [S.l.n.d. Pp. 30].
Unrealistic review of the historic development of the rights of the clergy and nobility; written probably early in 1789 , by a non-clerical author.
B.N. Lb39 1065

Le triumvirate redévoilé à la Nation assemblée [S.l., 1789. Pp. 70].
Spurious letters written to disgrace Boisgelin, Marboeuf, and Brienne. According to Barbier, a supplement to the work "Triumvirat"; reprint of part of the "Lettres secrétes sur l'état actuel de la religion...," which are attributed to the Abbés de Boismont and J.-S. Maury.
Duke Library

Lettre à chacun de MM. les députés composant les Etats-Généraux; par un des députés du bailliage de..... [S.l.n.d. Pp. 26].
Written by member of third in week of June 8th (between June 8th and 15th); urges union of orders; chides clergy gently for their inaction; stresses that all deputies are citizens first and must think of themselves as representatives of the French Nation.
B.N. Lb39 7285

Lettre à M. de la Luzerne, Evêque-Duc de Langres. . . au sujet de son oraison funèbre prononcée dans l'Eglise de Notre-Dame de Paris, le 7 septembre 1774 [S.l.n.d. (9 octobre 1774). Pièce].
(By le Père Joseph Massillon according to Barbier). A Jansenist work which criticizes the Bishop of Langres for his anti-Jansenist remarks.
B.N. Ld4 3015

Lettre à M. de Marboeuf, Archévêque de Lyon, au sujet de son mandement du 28 janvier 1789 [Lyon, 4 mars 1789. Pp. 20].
Duke Library

Lettre à M. D., par M. L.; ou Examen d'un ouvrage intitulé: "Réflexions sur les immunités ecclésiastiques considerées dans leur rapport avec les maximes du droit public et l'intéret national" [Paris, chez les marchands de nouveautés, 1788. Pp. 67].
A somewhat unsatisfactory reply to the closely-argued Réflexions.
B.N. Ld4 3060

Lettre à M. Duchesne, Curé de Saint-Nicolas de Meaux [S.l., 1789. Pp. 8].
Concerns a work teaching divine right of kings (and thus despotism for many persons) which was wrongly attributed to the curé; the mistaken work is intitled: Reclamations d'un curé de la ville de Meaux à l'Assemblée de l'ordre du clergé du Bailliage dudit Meaux, ce mercredi 18 avril 1789.
B.N. Lb39 7120

Lettre à messieurs les curés du diocèse d'Angers [S.l., 1789. Pp. 16].
Signed: "Vos députés à l'Assemblée du Clergé d'Anjou" [p. 16].
Report of certain irregularities found by clerical deputies at Anjou; urges that in the various bailliage meetings that the curés of Anjou demand the enacting of reforms by the delegates that they elect to Versailles.
B.S.P.R. Rév. V. 11

Lettre à M. l'Abbé Cérutti [S.l., 1789. Pp. 7].
Expresses doubt as to truth of criticisms made by Abbé Cérutti against the ex-minister Calonne in his Observations rapides sur la lettre du M. de Calonne au Roi; written early in 1789.
B.N. Lb39 1426

Lettre à M. l'Abbé de Prades, député du bailliage de Caudebec, pour le clergé, en réponse à celle qu'il a adressée, le samedi 6 juin 1789, à M. Bailly, Doyen de la Chambre du Tiers-Etat [S.l., 1789. Pp. 19].
Written after 17 June 1789 (see p. 19); a rather clumsy satire of a supposedly haughty letter from Prades to Bailly.
B.H.V.P. 954596

Lettre à M. l'Abbé de M..., par des curés, députés aux Etats-Généraux [S.l.n.d. (1789). Pp. 8].
Letter is addressed to abbé de Montesquieu, deputy from Paris, by curés of liberal group; the curés question whether Montesquieu was the author of a letter being circulated under his name by the "Chanoines de Province" in which it is indicated that Necker is displeased with

the revolt of the curés; the curés deny that Necker is displeased and attempt to justify their disobedience to the bishops; moreover, they state that reports of insolence of curés in electoral assemblies are perhaps exaggerated; probably written in May-June 1789.
B.N. Lb 39 8699

Lettre à M. le Comte de ..., ou considerations sur le clergé [S.l.n.d. Pp. 60].
A badly-reasoned defense of clergy's privileged position as a political corps; written, it seems, by a clergyman but not a curé, soon after second Assembly of Notables of 1788; defends clergy's wealth in attempting to prove that clergy paid as much tax as anyone else.
B.H.V.P. 950471

Lettre à M. le Curé de ..., député aux Etats-Généraux, sur les principaux abus qu'il faut réformer dans la cour de Rome, et dans le clergé de France; par M. de Francheville, Théologien Français et Anti-Ultramontain [A Cosmopolis, 1789. Pp. 108].
This important essay was written no doubt in March or April 1789; the point of view of the author is one of a learned student of religion and of clerical matters who has not taken any of the orders of the Church and who is rigorously Gallican; his position is thus one that could be held by a Gallican theologian, although the authorship can not be established beyond question; of interest is the role assigned by the author to the curés in the States-General, viz. that of "citizen-curé," that is, one inspired primarily by patriotism, and by "love for the public good and for the glory of France"; the inherent contradiction in this dual role is not apparent to the writer: the curé could not act equally as citizen and as curé in face of questions such as Church wealth and union with the third estate; therefore on the 19th June and the 4th August 1789, the curés acted primarily in the role of protectors of the national good, as citizens; later some would regret that the position of their own first estate was undermined in the process.
B.H.V.P. 965615

Lettre à M. le Curé de xxx, sur ces protestations, réclamations, etc. [S.l.n.d. Pp. 19].
The author of this work appears to be of the third estate; he attacks the clergy through the work of a M. le Curé de xxx, author of a pamphlet of the day; without knowing what was the particular work of the curé, we can not understand much of the author's commentary upon it; written, it seems, after the opening of the States-General.
B.N. Lb39 1013

Lettre à Mgr. l'Evêque d'A... et compagnie, auteurs de "l'Adresse aux provinces" [S.l.n.d. Pp. 22].
B.N. Lb39 8187

Lettre à Mr. B..., curé D.P., au Mans, sur l'utilité d'un scrutin général pour la nomination des seize députés aux Etats-Généraux [S.l.n.d. Pp. 8].
Signed "V.D.F." and written "au chateau de Fo, ce 4 mars 1789."
B.N. Lb39 1365

Lettre circulaire de Monseigneur l'Archévêque d'Aix (Jean-de-Dieu-Raymond-de-Boisgelin) au clergé régulier et séculier de son diocèse (20 mars) [S.l., 1789. Pp. 22].
Interesting statement of Boisgelin's views on taxation and Church property prior to the meeting of the States-General. Boisgelin advocates equality of taxation but only after verification of Church wealth. Arguing in defense of Church property, he declares that the clergy should pay in proportion to its revenues; the taxes paid by clergy are the price of protection by the State of Church property, the price to pay for the expense of armed forces to defend the clergy's wealth. He further declares that even as the first order of the State, the clergy possesses no other privilege than that of being taxed only by its consent. This privilege is common to all citizens and is "essential, inalterable, and independent of the distinction of orders" and is closely connected with the right of property. Boisgelin opposes the union of the three orders until differences have been worked out within the orders.
B.N. Lb 39 1452

Lettre de M. de B..... à M. de ....., Abbé Commendataire de ..... [S.l.n.d. Pp. 7].
Discusses the previous rejection by the Abbé of the argument that the clergy should not constitute a separate order; author opposes clergy's pretentions to form a separate order; written January-April 1789 by lay author.
B.N. Lb39 1823

Lettre de M. de Calonne, ministre d'Etat, à M. l'Evêque de Blois, sur le cahier de Madon [S.l.n.d. Pp. 56].
Dated 15 juin 1789 on page one; author, supposedly Calonne, asks Bishop of Blois why he has slandered him and his administration in a work entitled: Instructions et cahiers du hameau de Madon, (not located) pamphlet published by the printer of the Bishop and generally attributed to him.
B.N. Lb39 1836

Lettre de M. l'Archévêque d'Embrun [Pierre-Louis de Leyssin] à M. le Marquis de Talaru [Paris, le 1er mai 1789. Pp. 2].

Archbishop of Embrum announces that the withdrawal of the Marquis's name from the list of nobles favoring a new constitution for Dauphiné was the Marquis' own doing.
B.N. Lb39 1662

Lettre de l'auteur de "l'Essai historique sur l'origine des dîmes" [Bruxelles, le 19 janvier 1781 (incomplete). See Essai historique sur l'origine des dimes [S.l., 1780. Pp. 114].
B.N. Ld4 3027

Lettre de M. le marquis de M..., gentilhomme Breton, à Mgr. l'Eveque de ...; sur les débats entre le tiers et la noblesse [S.l.n.d. Pp. 34].
False letter; banal vehicle for ideas of third estate; work designed to evoke response from third on injustice and scheming quality of privileged orders; anti-noble and anti-higher clergy; written probably in May-June 1789.
B.H.V.P. 957848

Lettre de M. l'éveque de ... à l'évêque de ..., député aux Etats-Généraux (15 avril) [S.l.,1789. Pp. 124].
This is a serious work although it is impossible to ascertain whether the author is a cleric or merely a non-cleric who is intensely interested in clerical affairs. It appears probable, however, that the author is a conservative clergyman. The writer concedes abolition of clergy's privileged tax position; but he would have the ecclesiastical chamber of the States-General of 1789 correct this abuse along with the other wrongs of the Assemblies of the Clergy of 1750 and 1788. "Property," he declares "is the foundation of all society because property precedes society and society is but the union of properties." [p. 118]
B.N. Lb39 1528

Lettre de Monseigneur l'Archéveque d'Aix, à Monseigneur l'Archévêque de Narbonne [S.l., 1789 (février). Pp. 48].
Spurious and satirical work; Archbishop of Aix declares grimly that only ten or so prelates will be seen in the coming States-General.
Br. Mus. Rév. Fr. 331; l'Eglise II, No. 5

Lettre de Monseigneur l'Archévêque d'Aix à Monseigneur l'archévêque de Narbonne (28 février) [S.l., 1789. Pp. 22].
Insipid satire against the two prelates; the archbishops condemn system of voting for States-General; they conclude that there are only two alternatives: stop the meeting of the States, or become masters of it; but to master it, they must first get elected to it. This work was written just prior to the elections to the States probably by lay writer from Provence.
B.M. Lb 39 1243

Lettre de Rabelais aux curés députés aux Etats-Généraux [S.l. n.d. Pp. 7].
Written probably in June 1789; work attempts to win the curés from supporting egalitarianism and the third estate by playing on the fears of curés: "Once the authority of the bishops is overthrown, what will happen to you?"
B.N. Lb39 1692

Lettre des commissaires des trois ordres du diocèse d'Alais, à Monseigneur l'Evêque d'Alais [Alais, 22 janvier 1789. Pp. 12].
Duke Library

Lettre d'un curé à un chanoine [S.l.n.d. Pp. 39].
In the copy of the B.S.P.-R. is found on the title page the writing: "Brousse, curé de Volkrange, rue d'Anjou, No. 26."
This brochure was written after the 24th of January 1789 and before the elections to the States-General; it answers the demands of the regular clergy for greater representation in the assemblies as well as the attacks they had made on the curés in a work entitled: Réclamations et protestations des chapitres, communautés réguliers des deux sexes, commandataires et bénéficiers simples du Bailliage de ....; the author of the Lettre appears to be a curé from Troyes (see indication in Grégoire's handwriting on p. 5 of this particular copy); the author asks for equality within the Church and a more equal share of Church wealth for the curés.
B.S.P.-R. Rév. V, 6

Lettre d'un conseiller au parlement à M. l'Evêque de ... [S.l. n.d. Incomplete (B.N.)].
Weak plea by supposed Jansenist for greater exercise of episcopal authority; no real clue to date but probably 1788.
B.N. Ld4 3026

Lettre d'un curé à un de ses confrères, député aux Etats-Généraux [S.l.n.d. Pp. 17].
The copy in the Bibliothèque Nationale has, in addition, on the title page: "Sur la manière d'opiner, ou par ordre, ou par tete." The Abbé Grégoire had written in his copy (now deposited in the Bibliothèque de la Société du Port-Royal); "Mais pour un sot il est fort sage de ne pas avoir mis son nom." (written on title page)
In retrospect, Grégoire's judgement appears not far wrong. This pamphlet appears to a sincere--if somewhat vapid--statement by a conservative cleric during April-May 1789. The author argues against vote by head for three principal reasons: first, the nobility through its wealth will influence members of the third on important votes and, with

the inevitable support of the clergy, will control the States; second, the nobility, traditional champion of property rights, could ally with the clergy as two orders to prevent any violation of the Church's wealth; third, only through voting as an order could the clergy prevent anti-Catholic laws and the extension of the power of the Protestants, which is the real menace to the Church, and which will come about through freedom of religion; moreover, the Protestants, if they become more powerful, will enrich themselves at the expense of the Church's property.
B.N. Lb39 1691; B.S.P.-R. Rév. V, 13.

Lettre d'un curé à un de ses confrères, sur la nomination de leurs députés aux Etats-Généraux [S.l.n.d. Pp. 16].
Good example of curé propaganda; written just before elections to States-General; stresses civil role of curés and hence the reliance of the king upon them and the notion of a bond between the curés and the sovereign to combat the privileged classes.
B.N. Lb39 1373

Lettre d'un curé de Picardie à un évêque sur le droit des curés d'assister aux assemblées du clergé et aux Etats-Généraux, et sur quelques objets intéressants qui y sont relatifs [S.l., 10 février 1789. Pp. 34].
This pamphlet typifies a mild reaction by one curé to the criticisms leveled by the third against the clergy; the curé argues against temporal pretentions of the first estate; writing in favor of equal taxation, he queries: "Why cede to our enemies the triumph of forcing us?" (p. 6); bishops are requested to co-operate in conceding to the lower clergy the requested economic reforms; author stresses the role of the curé as citizen: "We have always been persuaded that there are not two sorts of subjects in the State, and that if the ecclesiastic can be distinguished from the lay person, it is but through his greater fidelity and obedience." (p. 12).
Br. Mus., Rév. Fr. 331; L'Eglise II, No. 4; B.N. Lb39 1155

Lettre d'un curé du bailliage d'Etampes à ses confrères; par d'Olivier, curé de Mauchamp [S.l.n.d. (6 mars 1789) Pp. 8].
Written just before elections to clergy at Etampes; the author advocates abolition of the distinction of orders; much of the pamphlet is concerned with setting safeguards so that the States-General might operate in perfect liberty to bring about necessary reforms and "give a truly national constitution." (p. 3)
B.N. Lb39 1372

Lettre d'un ecclésiastique de Province à M. l'Evêque de Blois [Joseph de Lauzières de Thémines], au sujet des "Représentations" addressées au roi par le clergé assemblée

en 1788 [S.l.n.d. Pp. 48].
Clerical author criticizes bishop for not stressing role of religion in his Representations (or Remonstrances)of 1788 to king; on page 48 is date "1 juillet" (1788).
B.H.V.P. 968106

Lettre d'un magistrat à Mm. les curés de son ressort, en leur envoyant la lettre du Roi pour la convocation des Etats-Généraux à Versailles le 27 avril 1789, et le réglement y annexé; avec un projet d'instructions ou doléances, etc. [S.l., 1789. No pagination of Lettre (Pp. 5); Pp. 18 (of Projet)].
Work of a lawyer desiring certain legal reforms in the administration; to win the support of the lower clergy, he offers considerable increases in portion; written early in 1789.
B.N. Lb39 1012

Lettres d'un Capucin à nosseigneurs du clergé de France [S.l., 1789. Pp. 95].
Thoroughgoing criticism of Church and proposals for its reform. Probably written just prior to the elections for the States-General.
Duke Library.

Lettres d'un curé de campagne sur l'arrêté de l'Assemblée Nationale qui supprime la dixme ecclésiastique [Paris, chez les marchands de nouveautés, 1789. Pp. 16].
Earnest protest by a curé against the suppression of tithes; the author is greatly influenced by Sieyès' work Observations sommaires sur les biens ecclésiastiques (Lb39 2171); the influence is especially evident on pp. 4, 5, 8, 9, 11.
B.N. Lb39 2185

Lettre posthume de M.B.L.D.Q., et mémoire en faveur des curés [S.l., premier mars 1789. Pp. 31].
This pamphlet comprises two sections: the first consists of a letter from the anonymous author, M.B., to a curé; the second is purported to be a motion by a "grand seigneur" at the "last assembly of notables" (1788) in favor of the rural curés. Despite the publication date, the Mémoire appears definitely written before 24 January 1789, and the author seems indeed not to have been a cleric.
B.N. Lb39 1342

Lettres secrètes sur l'état actuel de la religion et du clergé de France, à M. le Marquis de ...., ancien mestre de corp de cavalerie, retiré dans ses terres [S.l., 1781-1783. Pp. 22].

CF. Suite des "Lettres secrétes, sur l'état actuel de la religion et du clergé de France à M. le Marquis de ...., ancien mestre de corp de cavalerie, retiré dans ses terres" [S.l., 1783. Pp. 82].
Attributed to Abbés de Boismont and Maury by Barbier. Spurious letters written to attack administrative bishops; in Suite des lettres secrètes specific accusations are made against three administrative prelates, Marboeuf, Brienne, and Boisgelin, of a conspiracy to control religious affairs through Marboeuf's position as Ministre du Feuille des Bénéfices; an alliance with the Queen is to be exploited to form a philosophical and anti-religious party with the aim of establishing religion as a purely civil and political affair. Note that four of these "lettres secrètes" were reprinted in 1789 under the title, "Le triumvirat redévoilé à la nation assemblée" [S.l., 1789. Pp. 70].
B.N. Ld4 3028; Ld4 3029

L'Evangile du jour ou in illo tempore [S.l., 1789. Pp. 23].
On the title page: "Imprimé par ordre de la Noblesse et du Clergé."
A parody of the second Assembly of the Notables with the evangel as vehicle; a caustic endictment of the Clergy and Nobility. It appears to have been written after 24 January 1789 and before the elections for States-General.
Duke Library

Le voeu de la raison, pour les paroisses, les curés et les pauvres, à Louis XVI dans l'assemblée des notables de son royaume [S.l., 1787. Pp. 133 plus iii].
This pamphlet is one of the most important statements by a curé as to the aims of the lower clergy and the reforms desired within the first Assembly of Notables of 1787.
Br. Mus. R.F., Vol. 330; L'Eglise, Vol. I. and B.N. Lb39 6304

Liste générale des élections faites dans l'Assemblée du Clergé de la Prévôté et Vicomté dans les murs de Paris [Paris, C. L. Simon, impr., 1789. Pp. 4].
Duke Library

Mandement de Monseigneur l'Abbé de Val-Joyeux, sur l'abjection presente de l'état religieux [S.l., 1 février 1789. Pp. 20].
Satirical work ostensibly by an abbot, who condemns the esprit laïc and implores heaven to strike down the enemies of the Church.
Duke Library

Mandement de Monseigneur l'Archévêque d'Aix [Boisgelin], qui ordonne des prières pour le rétablissement de la tranquillité publique [S.l., 27 mars 1789. Pp. 15].

The Archbishop orders public prayers for the end of the famine and the troubles engendered by it at Aix.
E 4719 Aix 4

Mandement de Monseigneur l'archévêque et Comte de Lyon [Marboeuf] [S.l., 28 janvier 1789. Pp. 8].
B.N. E 2400, Lyon 32.

Mandement du tiers-état, à ses députés aux Etats-Généraux, pour servir de correctif au mandement de l'Archévêque de Lyon [S.l.n.d. Pp. 31].
Appears to have been written March-April 1789.
Duke Library

Mandement et instruction pastorale de Monseigneur l'Archéveque de Bordeaux, qui ordonne des prières publiques, pour demander au Ciel l'heureaux succès des Etats-Généraux du royaume, convoqués par le Roi [S.l., 14 février 1789. Pp. 32].
By Jerome-Marie Champion de Cicé, Archbishop of Bordeaux.

Maultrot, Gabriel-Nicolas. Consultation sur l'emploi de l'argent en effets royaux payables à terme [Délibéré à Paris, le 10 décembre 1787. Pp. 23].
A discussion of various aspects of royal financial negotiations during the period.
B.N. Fp. 3354

Maultrot, Gabriel-Nicolas. Défense du second ordre, contre les conférences ecclésiastiques d'Angers. [S.l., 1787]. 3 vols.
B.N. D 88850

Maultrot, G.N. et Tailhé, Abbé J. Essai sur la tolérance chrétienne [S.l. (in France), 1760. 2 parts in 1 volume].
B.N. Ld176 667

Maultrot, Gabriel-Nicolas. Les droits du second ordre, défendus contre les apologistes de la domination épiscopale, ou réfutation d'une consultation sur l'autorité législative des éveques dans leur diocèces, publiée en 1775 en faveur de M. de Condorcet, Eveque de Lisieux contre les curés de son diocèse. [S.l., 1789. Pp. 487 plus xvi].
A significant work by Maultrot in defense of position of curés.
B.N. D.88850(4); and E.6524

Mémoire à consulter et consultation pour les curés de la province du Dauphiné [Paris, impr. de P. G. Simon, 1789. Pp. 108]. Signed: Reymond et Hélié.
B.N. Ld4 5625

Mémoire du clergé au roi, au sujet des affaires présentes [S.l.n.d.. Pp.8].
Attached to B.H.V.P.'s copy is work entitled: Réponse du roi aux Remontrances du clergé [S.l.n.d. Pp. 4]. The pamphlet in B.H.V.P. numbered 953203 is the same as that numbered 952022. This essay was written late in 1788; it is a banal work that expresses clergy's confidence in king for calling the States-General; this pamphlet was written after the Réponse du roi because approval is expressed of the Réponse. In the Réponse the king supposedly declares that his veritable intentions have not been seized in the interpretation made of several articles of his edict establishing the Cour Plenière, that it was not his intention to take the privileges, and especially the capitulations from jurisdiction of provincial assemblies; moreover, king re-affirms his faith in the States-General.
B.H.V.P. 953203

Mémoire du clergé citoyen, ou réponse aux attaques de la noblesse [S.l.n.d. Pp. 21].
A curious yet important work in which the author, a member of the lower clergy yet not necessarily a curé, answers certain attacks of the nobility aimed at depriving the clergy of their deputies in the States-General; written before the Règlement du Roi of 24 January 1789; shows some of fears of lower clergy prior to the Règlement; reflects the degree of anti-clerical feeling late in 1788; provides a panorama of principal anticlerical ideas prior to the States; blames schism within clergy on higher clergy; throws light on attitudes of some clergy regarding their first duties as citizens; over-all impression is that at this time clergy felt on defensive, felt that the utility of their civil role was the one to be emphasized.
B.H.V.P. 953120

Mémoire en faveur des curés [S.l.n.d. Pp. 20].
Written on the eve of the meeting of the States-General by curé from Dauphiné; the demands, re-inforced by Jansenist-Richerist ideas, are rather standard: greater participation by curés in ecclesiastical government, recognition of curés as successors to the disciples, plea that curés obtain representation of half members of Bureaux des décimes (curés to name their own delegates); finally, that king be advised upon ecclesiastical affairs by a council domposed of one archbishop, two bishops, six curés, three others, and three doctors of theology.
B.N. Ld4 3055 and Lb39 1218

Mémoire pour les curés de France relativement à la convocation prochaine des Etats-Généraux [Avignon, chez les libraries associés, 1788. Pp. 94].

(Pamphlet is signed on p. 94 by "a great number of curés of the provinces of Lyonnais, Forez, Languedoc, Auvergne, and Provence.")
This is an interesting early reaction of curés to the calling of the States-General, written late in 1788, in which four principal points are set forth: 1.) the curés à portion congrue are isolated in their order insofar as temporal matters are concerned; 2.) nothing is to be more feared than to have the same type representation as they have had in past years; 3.) that since their order can not legally act without their representation, it is necessary for them to be in the States-General and in proportion to their numbers in the clergy and to the amount of taxes that they pay in décimes; 4.) that justice will not be done in this respect unless they have perfect freedom in the choice of their representatives.
B.H.V.P. 957307

Mémoire pour M. l'Evêque de Tournay, député aux Etats-Généraux [S.l.n.d. (1789). Pp. 16].
On the validity of the bishop's election; supports the bishop but urges him to be sensitive to public well-being in the Assembly; written soon after the opening of the States-General.
B.N. Lb39 1901

Mémoire sur l'administration et la reformation des biens du clergé [S.l., 1789. Pp. 73].
Reasoned attack with appeal to history against extreme wealth of higher clergy; proposes redivision of Church wealth in accordance with stipulations of historic donors with one-third each to Clergy, to upkeep of Churches, and to the poor (p. 16); sets forth a new scale of clerical salaries with great cuts in higher clergy and enormous increases for lower. Written probably in January-February 1789.
Duke Library

Mémoire pour servir à l'histoire de l'Archévêque de Sens, du Garde des Sceaux de La Moignon, du Marquis d'Agoult, et compagnie [S.l., juin 1789. Pp. 117]. Second title: Récit fait par un de MM. in tertia et en parlement toutes les chambres nationales, les pairs y séant, le mardi 29 avril 1788, au sujet des verifications ministérielles entreprises pour accroitre la masse de vingtièmes... Imprimé à Versailles, au mois de mai 1788.
Work against Brienne and Lamoignon; recounts the legal difficulties of Messieurs d'Epremenil and Monsabert from May 4th to May 6th 1788.
B.N. Lb39 1873

Memorial historique des Etats-Généraux pendant le mois de mai 1789; par un député du troisième ordre [S.l., 1789. Pp. 154].

A general account of the proceedings in the States-General in May 1789.
Cf. Second mémorial historique des Etats-Généraux, pendant le mois de juin 1789....
B.S.P.-R. I, 1.

Morellet, Abbé André. Observations sur le projet de former une Assemblée Nationale sur le modèle des Etats-Généraux de 1614 [S.l.n.d. Pp. 37].
Written in November-December 1788; argues for doubling the third and vote by order. Morellet later regretted his position as expressed herein.
B.N. Lb39 924

Moyens principaux de réforme importante et nécessaire dans l'administration, la discipline et les moeurs de clergé, presentés par plusieurs ecclésiastiques de la prévôté et vicomté de Paris à MM. les rédacteurs des cahiers pours les Etats-Généraux [S.l.n.d. Pp. 20].
A strong program of reform written from a curé point-of-view in March 1789; intended as a sort of model cahier.
B.N. Lb39 1512

Necker, Jacques. Sur l'administration de M. Necker; par lui-même. (Paris, 1791).

Nouvelle lettre à MM. les curés, députés aux Etats-Généraux; par M. Grégoire, curé d'Embermenil, député de Lorrain [S.l.n.d. (June, 1789). Pp. 40].
See first edition of this work entitled: Nouvelle lettre d'un curé à ses confrères, députés aux Etats-Généraux.
B.N. Lb39 1810

Nouvelle lettre d'un curé à ses confrères, députés aux Etats-Généraux [S.l.n.d. (June 1789). Pp. 40]. [By the Abbé Grégoire].
Two editions of this work appeared written within two weeks of each other; the second edition was entitled: Nouvelle lettre à MM. les curés, députés aux Etats-Généraux; par M. Grégoire, curé d'Embermenil, député de Lorrain [S.l.n.d. Pp. 40]. The only variations in the two are the first sentences of each, the change in title, and the fact that Grégoire put his name to the second edition. From the first sentences of the two works, we find that the first edition was written "five weeks after the opening of the States," hence between the 7th and 14th of June; the second, "nearly seven weeks after the opening," and it is obvious that it was composed before the union on the 19th; hence the second edition was written about the 16th or 17th of June. This essay is an eloquent and persuasive appeal to the curés for union with the third; it combats the current arguments against union and

argues lucidly that the curés must support either nobility or third.
B.N. Lb39 1809

Nouvelle mercuriale aux premiers ordres de l'Etat; Par M. Ber..... [S.l., avril 1789. Pp. 14].
Praises clergy for their expressions of willingness to renounce pecuniary privileges.
B.H.V.P. 956409

Objets de réclamation à mettre sous les yeux de l'assemblée où doit etre rédigé le cahier des doléances du clergé de Paris; par un citoyen inutile et qui se lasse d'être [S.l., 1789. Pp. 53].
Somewhat ordinary résumé of clerical demands by lay writer; would extend the authority of curés in parish to the right to nominate all who contribute to the cult including schoolteachers, preachers, etc.; the latter measures accord with Richerist doctrines.
B.N. Lb39 1511

Observations critiques, touchant le mémoire du chapitre de Toulon, ayant pour titre, "Représentations respecteuses du chapitre de l'Eglise de Toulon, faites à sa Majesté, au sujet du Réglement du 24 janvier 1789" [S.l.n.d. Pp. 38].
Written in March or April 1789, this work attempts to answer the authors of the Représentations who had criticized the Réglement du 24 janvier because its provisions resulted in under-representation for the bishops and over-representation for the curés in the electoral assumblies.
B.S.P.-R., Rév. V. 14

Observations modestes d'un citoyen sur les opérations de finances de M. Necker, et sur son compte rendu; adressées à MM. les pacifiques auteurs des Comment? des Pourquoi? et autres pamphlets anonymes [S.l.n.d. Pp. 86].
Attacks Necker's publication of the compte rendu in 1781. According to Barbier, the author is Robert de Saint-Vincent, and the work was published at Geneva in 1781.
Duke Library

Observations pour M. l'Evêque de Tournay [Guill.-Florent de Salm-Salm] [S.l.n.d. Pp. 6].
On the validity of the bishop's election; written March-April 1789.
B.N. Lb39 1900

Observations sur la répartition des biens ecclésiastiques, et particulièrement des dimes; avec un plan d'administration et de réparation plus juste, pour le bien de la réligion

et le soulagement des peuples [Bruxelles, 1781. Pp. 68]. Practical work, mild in tone, by a curé emphasizing the necessity of reform of the administration of the tithe and the elevation of the status of curés--both measures designed to encourage more persons to take up the priesthood; proposes creation of Diocesan Bureaux of Tithes in each diocese under chairmanship of bishop and composed of curés elected in synod assemblies; includes also a program for reform of system of benefices; a scholarly discussion of the historical basis of church institutions drawn in great part from works of Abbé Claude Fleury on ecclesiastical history.
B.N. Ld4 3026; Duke Library

Observations sur la réponse du roi à la cour des aides, du 25 août 1787; de la nécessité d'assembler les Etats-Généraux, et de rappeller le Parlement de Paris [S.l., 1787. Pp. 21].
Written between 25 August and 24 September 1787 (the Parlement was recalled at the latter date).
Duke Library

Observations sur le cahier du clergé de Paris intra-muros [Paris, C. Simon, 1789. Pp. 43].
Somewhat puerile critique of the Paris cahier.
B.N. Lb39 1567

Observations sur le clergé de France, tant séculier que régulier, son état actuel, les abus qu'il renferme, et les réformes qui pourraient y etre faites à l'avantage du gouvernement et aux moeurs de ce siècle [Amsterdam, 1785. Pp. 129].
Program of reform in clergy, emphasizing abolition of clerical celibacy; appears to be by non-clerical writer.
B.N. Ld4 10373

Observations sur le cahier du tiers-état, relativement à l'assemblée des Etats-Généraux, par M..... [S.l.n.d. Pp. 36].
By P.-L. Goulliart, Professor en droit, according to Barbier [Vol. III, p. 625]. Probably written in March-April 1789.
Duke Library

Observations sur les prétendues immunités du clergé, relativement à l'impôt..., par un citoyen impartial [S.l., 1789. Pp. 78].
Appears to have been written in January, 1789.

Observations sur les Remontrances du clergé du 15 juin 1788 [S.l.n.d. Pp. 29].
Expresses rather profound ideas for a pamphlet; writer appears to be a lawyer writing in about July or August

of 1788; the Remontrances are used as a point of departure to a discussion of one stipulation, viz. that the consent of the Nation is required for new taxes; author agrees with this as with other points of the clergy's demands; influence of Rousseau and Montesquieu is manifest.
B.N. Ld4 3049

Ouverture des Etats-Généraux, faite à Versailles le 5 mai 1789; discours du Roi; rapport du M. le Directeur Général des Finances; fait par ordre du Roi [Paris, 1789. Pp. 103 plus Pp. vi: Etat général des revenus et des dépenses fixes)].
On the title page: "De l'Imprimérie Royale." Official text of the opening day's speeches.

Pétition au nom des curés à portion congrue, à présenter aux Etats-Généraux, par un gros décimateur [S.l.n.d. Pp. 20].
A work full of conventional and oft-repeated ideas concerning the economic plight of the curés; outstanding mainly for the extreme moderation of the demands of the author; the date 1788 is written on the frontispiece of the copy in the B.N. and, in effect, the work appears definitely to date from the latter part of 1788.
B.N. Ld4 3057

Pétition des curés [S.l.n.d. Pp. 14].
Written after 27 December 1788 (see pages 5-6) and before the elections of the Clergy.
Duke Library

Plan de conduite, donné à l'Archévêque de Sens, Principal Ministre, au mois de juin 1788; dont l'original en chiffres a été trouvé chez lui [S.l., PP. 15].
Appears to have been written between 27 December 1788 and 24 January 1789; authenticity can be verified only by inference.
Duke Library.

Plan d'un mémoire par un vicaire savoyard, qui ne possède avec son curé que 900 livres de rente [Grenoble, chez l'Imprimeur des Communes, l'an de justice 1789 (mardigras 1789). Pp. 63].
Written on the copy at the B.N.: "Par L. P. Beringer."
This work is written in the form of an exchange of letters between the vicaire and a lawyer at Paris; their purpose is to prepare a Mémoire for the Bishop of Grenoble which will publicize the cause of the curés in the coming States-General; their plan is to separate themselves from the point-of-view of the bishops as expressed in the Doléances of 1749 and 1788 on ecclesiastical immunities of taxation; the propaganda of the higher clergy has convinced the king that the present system of levying the décimes is

equitable--this concept must be combatted; this brochure was written before the elections to the States-General in Grenoble, hence in February-March of 1789.
B.N. Lb39 1231

Portion congrue; par Louis-Franç. Lemore de Livonnière, Curé de Saint-Sauveur de Champtelou [S.l.n.d. Pp. 14].
Competent survey of votes taken by the clergy to increase the portion congrue at the different meetings of the bailliages and sénéchaussées; written probably in April 1789 after most of the elections to the States-General had taken place (and definitely after 18 March 1789--see page 7, bottom).
B.N. Lb39 1483; B.H.V.P. 965782

Portrait des députés aux Etats-Généraux qui s'y sont déjá distingués; précédé d'une idée critique des discours d'ouverture, et de celle des motions sur les faits principaux qui y ont eu lieu pendant le premier mois [S.l., chez les marchands de nouveautés, 1789. Pp. 50 (Part I: pp. 1-20; Part II: pp. 1-30)].
Written soon after the 31 May 1789 by non-clerical writer of conservative bent--possibly a bourgeois of Paris; valuable account of many of the activities during first month of the States-General.
B.N. Lb39 1785

Première lettre de l'évêque de A...., [Arles] député aux Etats-Généraux, à l'évêque de B...., non député (21 mai) [S.l.n.d. Pp. 16].
Spurious writing purporting to be a secret communication between two bishops to plan the strategy of the "episcopal party" against the curés in the Chamber of the Clergy. Appears to have been written soon after the formation of the Conciliatory Commission in May 1789.
B.N. Lb39 1722; Also B.S.P.R. Rév. V. 12

Procès-verbal des conférences sur la vérification des pouvoirs, tenus par MM. les Commissaires du clergé, de la noblesse et des communes, tant en la Salle du Comité des Etats-Généraux, qu'en présence de MM. les Commissaires du Roi, conformément au desir de Sa Majesté [Paris, chez Baudoin, 1789. Pp. 216].
Copy found at B.H.V.P. is bound with Vallet's Récit des principaux faits [Paris, de l'Imprimerie Nationale, 1790. Pp. 119].
B.H.V.P. 968752

Procès-verbal des derniers Etats-Généraux tenus aux enfers; où se trouvent les plaidoyers de l'Evêque de Grenoble et de Judas; dédié au clergé & à la noblesse de France; par

l'Archévêque d'Embrun [S.l., 1789. Pp. 91].
On title page: "De l'Imprimérie Royale des Enfers." Mordant satire against the clergy; the principal character being Hay de Bonteville, "suicided Bishop of Grenoble," who arrives in Hell the sixth of October 1788 and promptly challenges Lucifer to yield to him the post of Premier Ministre, which had long been held by Judas. Figuring in the States-General convoked to decide the question are: Boniface VIII, Richelieu, Louis IX, Louis XI, Louis XII, Sully, Turgot, Dubois, etc. Written after the revolt in Brittany of January, 1789.

Procès-verbal des séances de l'Assemblée du Clergé du Bailliage secondaires y réunis; tenue dans l'Eglise des Cordeliers de ladite ville, au mois d'avril 1789 [Rouen, chez P. Seyer, Imprimeur de Son Eminence Monseigneur le Cardinal, rue de Petit-Puits, 1789. Pp. 105].
Br. Mus., Rév. F. 332; L'Eglise III, No. 3

Procès-verbal des séances des députés des communes; depuis le 12 juin 1789 jusqu'au 17 juin, jour de la constitution en Assemblée Nationale [Paris, chez Baudoin, 1789. Pp. 104].
B.S.P.-R. Rév. II, 2

Projet de cahier des trois ordres réunis de Paris; par M. l'Abbé B.. Z..D. [S.l., 1789. Pp. 38 (31 pp. plus 7 pp.)]. B.N. Lb39 1555

Projet de conciliation, sur la manière de vérifier les titres et pourvoirs aux Etats-Généraux; par M. l'Abbé O.V.A. e. S. [S.l., 4 juin 1789. Pp. 30].
Technical discussion of the thorny problem of verification of credentials by the deputies of the clergy; legal bent of the work indicates collaboration between a lawyer and a member of the clergy in the writing thereof.
B.N. Lb39 1791

Projet de doléances en faveur de la religion aux Etats-Généraux de 1789 [Paris, Crapart, 1789. Pp. 8].
This pamphlet was written by a member of the clergy--perhaps of the upper clergy--in about January-February 1789; it contains a very moderate program of reforms in the Church; the abuses within the hierarchy, "certainly exaggerated by the malignity of the false philosophers."
B.N. Lb39 1043

Projet de réponse à un mémoire repandu sous le titre de "Mémoire des princes" [S.l.n.d. Pp. 51].
Attributed to the Abbé André Morellet and dated the 20 December 1788, this work appeared under another title as well: Projet de réponse au Roi [S.l., 1788. Pp. 31] (Lb39 868). This work argues against the Mémoire and favors doubling of the third.
B.N. Lb39 867

Projet d'un mémoire des curés du diocèse d'Angers, relativement à la convocation des Etats-Généraux [S.l.n.d. Pp. 19].
Important statement of aims of the curés prior to 24 January 1789; written probably in November-December 1788 (Garrett's classification of this work as between 27 December and 24 January appears incorrect); regarding the States, the curés want to have "representatives of their class and of their choice." (p. 18).
B.N. Lb 39 1029; Br. Mus. Rév. Fr. 332; L'église, III, No. 2.

Projet et motifs de cahier de doléances, plaintes, remontrances et offres à présenter aux assemblées provinciales d'Artois, de Flandres, de Hainault et de Cambrisès, par les abbayes . . . prieurés et autres corps reguliers desdites provinces [S.l., 1789. Pp. 44].
Rather dull defense of their property by regular clergy of the Belgian provinces using many standard ideas such as the utility of the monks, their good works in caring for the poor, etc.
B.N. Lb39 1396

Prône patriotique, sur le salut de l'état; par M. Dubourg, Curé de Saint-Hilaire, près de Nanci [S.l., 1789. Pp. 31].
A conservative plea for support of the king's efforts to correct the troubles of the kingdom through the calling of the States-General; contains a request to the bishops that they accept the doubling of the third; reassures the third estate that proportional repartition of taxes will be obtained. Written between January and March 1789.
Duke Library

Protestation du chapitre de l'Eglise Cathedrale de Lavaur; signé l'Evêque de Lavaur (et une douzaine de chanoines) [S.l.n.d. Pp. 11].
Written after the elections to the States-General at Lavaur of 28 April 1789, this work is somewhat typical of the protest literature that was turned out by the regular clergy and by the episcopacy against the domination by the curés of the clerical assemblies and against the Réglement du Roi of 24 January 1789 which made this possible.
B.S.P.R. Rév. V, 15

Questions débattues, concernant le clergé de France; avec un projet pour acquitter ses dettes [S.l., 1789. Pp. 16].
Hodgepodge of current anti-clerical ideas presented in an unorganized way; particularly attacks the regular clergy; favors seizure of all monastic lands by king and their sale to pay the debts of the State; probably written very early in 1789.
B.N. Lb39 1052

Question soumise à nosseigneurs des Etats-Généraux [S.l.n.d. Pp. 7].
Favors nullification of the election of the Bishops of Tournay and Ypres to the States-General.
B.N. Lb39 1899

Question théologique; les membres d'un chapitre peuvent-ils se séparer de leur corps, pour se présenter, personnellement, à l'assemblée des trois états, en vertu des titres d'autres bénéfices, dont ils seraient en meme temps pourvus? [S.l.n.d. (1789). Pp. 8].
The author of this work, doubtless an ecclesiastic, argues against the propositions; the mere posing of such a question just prior to the elections for the States-General indicates the dissatisfaction of canons with the electoral rules of 24 January 1789 and the dissension engendered thereby.
B.H.V.P. 957471

Récit des séances des députés des communes, depuis le 5 mai 1789, jusqu'au 12 juin suivant, époque à laquelle la rédaction des procès verbaux a commencé [S.l.n.d. (1789). Pp. 172]. Signed: "Salomon, Emmery, Camus, Commissaires nommés par décret du 10 décembre 1789." (p. 172).
The copy of this work found in B.H.V.P. is bound with Vallet's Récit des principaux faits [Paris, de l'Imprimerie Nationale, 1790. Pp. 119].
B.H.V.P. 968752; B.S.P.-R. Rév. II, 1

Réclamations de l'église de Toulouse [S.l., 1788. Pp. 16].
Letters contained therein are dated 10 and 12 July, 1788.
Duke Library

Réclamations des curés du royaume contre les injustices du haut clergé [S.l., 1789. Pp. 39].
Written in January 1789; rather trenchant attack upon injustices of higher clergy with emphasis on (1.) the insufficiency of the portion congrue; (2.) the "unjust exclusion of curés from the Assemblies of the Clergy;" (3.) the "iniquitous and disproportionate distribution of the taxes laid on the curés (décimes)."
B.N. Lb39 1212

Réflexions critiques et impartiales sur les revenues et sur les contributions de clergé, en France; ou, extraits de lettres écrites en 1786 et 1787 à son Eminence Monseigneur le Cardinal Boncompagni-Ludovisi, à Rome. Par M. l'Abbé de Mesmont [S.l., 1788. Pp. 139].
Written after publication of Necker's Compte Rendu; the letters run from 14 July 1786 to 20 May 1787; a technical treatise on fiscal reforms within Church showing that Necker's estimate of Church income was high; outlines such measures as suppression of monasteries not engaged in useful work; evaluation of dimes and more equitable distribution thereof; proposes that infeudated tithes be exchanged against Church property: this would provide funds for increasing number of curés from 40,000 to 50,000.
B.H.V.P. 951440

Réflexions d'un curé sur l'administration des biens de l'Eglise [S.l.n.d. Pp. 16].
Written in the months just preceeding the States-General; bitter attacks are made on the higher clergy's administration of Church property as well as upon the priors, chanoines, etc.; emphasizes that clergy are citizens first (leur première qualité), then members of clerical order; urges equality of taxation and ecclesiastical reforms to be carried out by States-General.
B.N. Lb39 1055

Réflexions d'un patricien, et examen des droits de la nation, de l'utilité et légitimité des privilèges des deux ordres; et réflexions à l'usage des élus aux Etats-Généraux [S.l., 1789. Pp. 24].
Written in January-February 1789 by person of an aristocratic point-of-view; a defense of the rights of the nobility; à propos the clergy, the author declares: "The clergy alone in this tilting-match walk with precaution; they wait to take sides until they have judged the best horse to back . . . ." (p.6).
B.N. Lb39 1066

Réflexions d'un zélé patriote [A la Haye, 1787. Pp. 17].
Urges a strengthening of the fiscal administration of the kingdom.
Duke Library

Réflexions sommaires sur les religieux en général, et doléances que les capucins en particulier présentent aux Etats-Généraux [S.l.n.d. Pp. 32].
Written not long after the opening of the States-General.
B.N. Lb39 1534

Réflexions sur le clergé [S.l.n.d. Pp. 19].
Probably written just prior to States-General; bitter tirade against clergy, "cette race maudite;" author favors alliance of third and nobility and exclusion of clergy from State affairs, tho' letting latter remain as a corps; author expresses himself through allegory which obscures real intent of the writing in places except as an expression of anticlerical sentiments in a Voltairean vein.
B.H.V.P. 953052; B.N. Lb39 1050

Réflexions sur les immunités ecclésiastiques considérées dans leur rapport avec les maximes du droit public et l'intéret naturel; par M.C. . . . [Chas], avocat, et M. l'Abbé de M . . . [Montignon] [Paris, Maradan, 1788. Pp. 161].
Printed "Avec approbation et permission du Roi."
The dual authorship is seen in the combination of a rational-legalist viewpoint with that of an ecclesiastical one; legal arguments are employed in a defense of a clerical immunities and of Church property; power of the king to reform certain abuses within the hierarchy is admitted; this work appeared soon after 16 May 1788 (date that the

Permission du Roi was granted).
B.N. Ld4 3059

Réflexions sur l'état actuel de l'Eglise [S.l., 1787. Pp. 8].
[By the Père Lambert d'après Barbier].
The copy of this work in the Bibliothèque Nationale has been lost or misplaced, an event which took place during the reading of the brochure in 1963. An official opinion is that the chances of its reappearing in the near future are slight.
B.N. Ld4 3042

Réflexions sur l'exclusion qu'on a donnée dans l'ordre du clergé; aux chargés de procuration qui n'ont pas de suffrage personnel; par le P.M., G.D.C.D.M., P.D.C. [S.l, 1789. Pp. 8].
This pamphlet, written just before the meeting of the States-General, argues that members of the mendicant orders and seminarians can go to the meeting of the States by procuration.
Br. Mus. Rév. Fr. 331; L'Eglise II, No. 8.

Réforme de la noblesse et du clergé [S.l., 1789. Pp. 37].
Wide-sweeping but sincere plan for reform of the administration of the Church by an aristocratic author; written a few months before the meeting of the States-General; includes plan to suppress all monasteries except two virtuous orders; aim is to make nobility and clergy more compact, vigorous, and useful.
B.N. Lb39 1056

Réforme du clergé, par l'auteur de C.C., conclue, decidée et imprimée en Sorbonne, et agréée par le S.P. le Pape [S.l., 1783. Pp. 72].
Serious program of fiscal reform of clergy by lay author asking for seizure of ecclesiastical wealth by State; his attitude toward the clergy's status in society is that by virtue of their owning property they have become civil and political members of the State: "Vous êtes apôtres, et comme tels votre régne n'est point de ce monde; vous ne possédez rien dans l'état . . . mais vous avez acquis des biens, des possessions et des titres. Vous êtes dévenus membres civiles et politiques de l'état." (p. 6).
B.H.V.P. 962359; B.N. Ld4 3030

Relation de tout ce qui s'est passé de relatif au clergé, depuis le vendredi 19 juin [S.l., 1779 (sic. 1789). Pp. 14].
Very superficial account.
B.S.P.-R. Rév. IV, 5.

Relation sommaire, fidèle et véritable de ce qui s'est passé dans l'assemblée du clergé de Paris, intra muros [S.l.n.d. Pp. 64].
Written on frontispiece of copy in B.H.V.P.; "juin 1789."
Purpose of work is to relate the constant domination of

episcopacy and continual subjection of the lower clergy of Paris in the meeting that lasted till 18 May 1789; author accuses Archbishop of Paris of despotic actions: "The episcopal spirit is a spirit of domination, and domination is essentially destructive of all liberty." (p. 4).
B.H.V.P. 954486

Remontrances du clergé. Par M. l'Archéveque de Narbonne. Du 22 Mai 1788 [S.l., 1788. Pp. 3].
A reprint in pamphlet form of Narbonne's discourse at the Assembly of the Clergy of 1788 in which he states that the clergy does not have the 80 millions requested by king, that it must borrow the sum, but that the public will not subscribe to the loan unless it is registered by Parlements; hence need to suspend measures against Parlements until the convocation of the States-General; "Your Majesty can demand no tax until the convocation of the States-General." (p. 3).
B.H.V.P. 961775

Remontrances du clergé, presentées au roi le dimanche 15 juin 1788 [S.l.n.d. Pp. 30].
The Remontrances were presented to Louis XVI at the close of the Assembly of the Clergy of 1788.
B.S.P.-R. Rév. IV, 4; B.H.V.P. 965071

Rendez-nous nos neuf francs; par M. l'Abbé . . . [S.l.n.d. Pp. 4].
Addressed to Mirabeau after the suppression of his Journal des Etats-Généraux (by an arret du conseil of 7 mai 1789); abbé demands return of his subscription money; accuses Mirabeau with wanting money, not intending to report the news.
B.N. Lb39 1701

Réponse à l'epitre à mon confrére: ou nouveaux sentimens de moderation d'un pretre de la ville de Rennes [S.l.n.d. Pp. 6].
Date unknown but probably late 1788 or early 1789; relates to a local dispute between priests at Rennes; clerical author writes to show, amongst other things, "that a veritable priest is detached from all temporal interest." (p. 2).

Réponse au libelle calomnieux de quelques dignitaires et chanoines de l'Eglise Cathédrale de Tulles; par des curés députés à l'assemblée des Etats-Généraux [S.l.n.d. Pp. 16].
On the title page of the copy in the B.S.P.-R. is written: "Par Rangard, curé député d'Anjou aux Etats-Généraux." This doubtless refers to Rangeard, archipretre and curé of Andard (now in the Department of Maine et Loire and hence in Anjou).
This tract is a strong reply to the work published by two chanoines of the Cathedral of Tulles who were not elected to the States-General and who complained of it. The work

brings out the bitter economic strife between the chanoines and the curés in Tulles (see especially pp. 5, 6).
B.S.P.-R. Rév. V, 8

Réponse de M... à l'Evêque de ..., sur cette question: Y a-t-il quelque remède aux maux de l'Eglise de France? [S.l., 1778. Pp. 12]. [By le Père Joseph Massillon d'après Barbier].
In the pamphlet is given the date 24 mai-13 nov. 1776; a pro-Jansenist work blaming the evils within the clergy on the Jesuits.
B.N. Ld4 3018

Réponse de M... à un abbé fanatique, ou moyen pour rendre le noble et le tiers-état satisfait [S.l.n.d. Pp. 20].
Written late 1788 or early 1789; emphasizes excessive and all-consuming pride of clergy as well as their scorn for third; calls for confiscation of Church property by king so that clerical wealth can aid the people.
B.H.V.P. 955904

Réponse de M. Bailly, Président de l'Assemblée Nationale, à l'ordre du clergé [S.l., le 22 juin 1789. Pp. 3].
Bailly's greeting to the clergy who came to join the third, greeting in which stress is laid on the rôle of Jallet and associates (un-named, however) who preceded the others and prepared the way.
B.H.V.P. 956493

Réponse de M. l'Archévêque de Sens [Loménie de Brienne] à M. de Calonne, relativement à sa lettre écrite au Roi [S.l. n.d. (16 mars 1789). Pp. 8].
Apocryphal; pretends to be a reply to the original Lettre adressée au Roi par M. de Calonne, le 9 février 1789 [London, impr. de T. Spilsbury, s.d.].
B.N. Lb39 1413

Réponse d'un curé agé de 97 ans à Mgr. le Duc d'Orléans (23 mars 1789) [S.l.n.d. Pp. 7].
Signed S..., D.D. curé de S.P. This tract supports certain ideas of the Duke of Orléans, especially those concerning property and its inviolable nature; a somewhat senile writing that pleads for the preservation of the clergy's revenues and biens.
B.N. Lb39 1435

Réponse d'un curé de campagne, à la lettre circulaire du chapitre métropolitain, au sujet des commissaires ecclésiastiques nommés lors de l'assemblée générale, tenue aux Dominicains le 20 novembre dernier [S.l., 1789. Pp. 16].
Expresses lack of confidence in the policy of the metropolitain chapter in its zealous defense of rights of

clergy and its privileges. Written in early months of 1789.
Duke Library

Réponse d'un habitant de Paris et bon patriote à quatre de ses amis formant une petite société littéraire dans les Vosges, ou les pourquoi et les c'est que, sur la noblesse, la magistrature et le clergé [S.l., 1789. Pp. 23].
Written probably early in 1789; accuses clergy of deceiving weaker elements of the population, of lies and ruses to get rich; on the inability of the French to resist tyranny, the author declares: "The fact is the nation is divided into a thousand little classes all with their particular interests to safeguard--all are enemies of the others.... It is this petit esprit de parti, this jealousy of vocation, that prevents the nation from uniting against the common enemy." (p. 20)
B.N. Lb39 1060

Requête des curés de France au Roi sur la capitation et les portions congrues [S.l., 1778. Pp. 4].
Requests of the curés set in reasonably competent verse; an example of their wit: "Grand Roi de ton conseil la sage politique / Nous fit de cinq cents francs le partage modique ... / Tandis que le prélae dans la fleur de ces jours / Presse le mol duvet d'un fauteuil de velours,/ Et remplissant de loin les devoirs de la crosse Fait / rouler dans Paris un superbe carosse...."
Ye 32025

Requête des curés du diocèse d'Auch à nosseigneurs de l'Assemblée Générale de France (signé: Cenac, Curé de Saint-Arroman; Couture, archiprêtre de Sos; tous députés des curés du diocèse d'Auch) [Auch, J.-P. Duprat, 1785].
Demands by the curés of Auch for economic reforms to increase their revenues; this work was suppressed by an Arrêt of the Conseil d'Etat du Roi the 4 November 1785.
B.N. Ld4 3038

Requête des fidèles à nosseigneurs les évêques de l'Assemblée Générale du Clergé de France [S.l.n.d. (juin 1788). Pp. 105]. [By le Père Lambert, d'après Barbier].
An address to the General Assembly of the Clergy in June 1788; interesting discussion of the evil reputation of the clergy, the abuses within the Church; suggestions for reform are moderately but urgently delineated.
B.N. Ld4 3023

Requête d'une société rustique à toutes les assemblées générales, provinciales du royaume; Par un curé de campagne à portion congrue [S.l., 1788. Pp. 71].
Written after 8 May 1788 (see page 69); a dispassionate

argument against the heavy burden of taxation laid upon the rustic class, which paid 17/20's of their produce in taxes according to the author.
Duke Library

Représentations du chapitre d'Auxerre au Roi, au sujet du règlement du 24 janvier 1789 [S.l.n.d. (31 mai 1789). Pp. 41].
A protest against the electoral procedure of the Règlement which tended to give the curés greater voting power.
B.N. Le23 26

Représentations du chapitre de l'Eglise Cathédrale d'Apt, adressées au roi, au sujet du Règlement du 24 janvier 1789, commun à tout le royaume, et du Règlement particulier pour le Comté de Provence, du 2 mars 1789 [Aix, 8 mai 1789. Pp. 141].
Detailed protest over insufficiency of representation accorded to cathedral chapters by king's Règlement.
B.S.P.-R. Rév. V, 16

Reproche d'un curé de campagne, à son confrère, député aux Etats-Généraux [S.l.n.d. (June 1789). Pp. 18].
Written during first two weeks of June 1789, this is a statement of sentiment held in some quarters of the clergy; charges that a conspiracy of bishops has delayed matters in the first estate; favors union with the third; praises Necker but questions whether a Calvinistic "heretic" should hold clergy's fate in his hands; declares that all is lost for curés if this "insurrection" fails; states that vote by head was implicit in the king's decision to double the Third's representation.
B.N. Lb39 1808

Résumé des principaux cahiers et écrits relatifs aux Etats-Généraux; du 25 avril 1789 [S.l.n.d. Pp. 53].
Not a real résumé: merely a banal reform work advocating vote by head among other things.
B.N. Lb39 1577

Revue des principaux écrits sur les Etats-Généraux [S.l.n.d. Pp. 63].
Digest of some of the best known tracts of the day including: Qu'est-ce que le tiers-état?; Esquisse du Mémoire pour les curés, etc.
B.N. Lb39 7071; Br. Mus. Rév. Fr. Vol. 17, E-G, Vol. IX

[Reymond, Henri]. Droits des curés et des paroisses, considérés sous leur double rapport, spirituel et temporel. Paris, 1776. 2 vols.
Most significant first work by Reymond (1737-1820), Curé of Saint-George at Vienne, which states forcefully the

economic rights of the curés; Reymond became a champion in the region of Dauphiné for curé rights and privileges within the hierarchy as against those of the higher clergy, intermediate clergy, and the gros décimateurs. This work, although condemned by the Parlement of Grenoble, became a sort of handbook for the protest movement of the curés.
B.N. E 7316

Roderer, M. (Conseiller au Parlement de Metz, de la Société Royale des Sciences et Arts de la même ville.) De la députation aux Etats-Généraux [S.l., 8 novembre 1788. Pp. 88].
Author argues that clergy is a corps not an order in the nation; hence he opposes the clergy's having a separate place as one of the three orders in the States-General.
B.N. Lb39 681

Saint-Jean bouche d'or [S.l., 1789. Pp. 89].
Written in November 1788 d'après Wallon; certainly written before 24 January 1789 and perhaps published before then as well; lay author who complains of administrative bishops; argues that public felicity is goal of religion; condemns clerical participation in temporal affairs, hence opposes clergy's presence in States.
B.N. Lb39 1190

Second mémorial historique des Etats-Généraux, pendant le mois de juin 1789; par un député du troisième ordre [S.l., 1789. Pp. 222].
Deals almost exclusively with proceedings in the Commons.
B.S.P.-R. Rév. I, 2

[Sieyès, Abbé Emmanuel-Joseph]. Essai sur les privilèges [S.l., 1788. Pp. 48].
First pamphlet published by Sieyès in November 1788; author argues that honors and privileges not justified either by common law or by public service are iniquitous; his remarks upon the "privileged mendicity" of the first two orders show that his allegiance to first estate was stretched to the limit.
B.N. Lb39 781; and Lb39 781A (edition of 1789)

[Sieyès, Abbé Emmanuel-Joseph]. Qu'est-ce que le tiers-état? [S.l., 1789. Pp. 127].
Third and most famous of the trilogy of pamphlets by Sieyès; published early in January 1789; written in December 1788; argument is that the third estate is the nation; Sieyès adopts the viewpoint of the third in this work and counsels this order to refuse to co-operate with the other two orders to provoke a schism; only by indecent action can the third obtain their goals.

[Sieyès, Abbé Emmanuel-Joseph]. Vues sur les moyens d'éxecution dont les représentants de la France pourront disposer en 1789 [S.l., 1789. Pp. 161].
Although written first of the three pamphlets by Sieyès (in about October 1788), this work was not published till December 1788; contains indication of his later ideas in expression of concept that rights of the nation must be identified with rights of third; representatives of third estate, in saving State from bankruptcy in States, may take and retain the legislative power.

Sixième lettre d'un évêque français à la nation [S.l.n.d. (22 mai 1789). Pp. 30].
Vague letter preaching against the "excesses" of the day.
B.N. Lb39 1735

Sur la forme d'opiner aux Etats-Généraux, par M. L'Evêque-Duc de Langres [S.l., 1789. Pp. 119].
Conciliatory work by La Luzerne which was distributed to the deputies of the States-General on 11 May 1789.
Duke Library

Sur la liberté de la presse, imité de l'anglais, de Milton, par le compte de Mirabeau [Londres, 1788. Pp. 66].
On page 64 we read that this pamphlet was at the press when the arrêté of 5 December 1788 was made known.
Duke Library

Sur l'ascendant aristocratique de la noblesse dans le clergé [S.l.n.d. Pp. 48].
Written about December 1788; author writes distinctly from a curé point-of-view; the thought is woolly in parts, but the central theme is dependence upon the king to aid the lot of the curés, to restore the cures primitifs to the vicaires perpetuels, etc.; the nobles represent the real danger to the king's authority: they are to be feared for they covet ecclesiastical property (they have already taken what the monasteries have lost); author would place all Church property under king's domain and hope from him a better share.
B.N. Lb39 1213

Tableau moral de clergé de France sur la fin du XVIIIème siècle, ou le clergé français avant les Etats-Généraux, et ce qu'il doit devinir après [S.l. (avril) 1789. Pp. 164].
Judging from internal evidence, it appears that the author of this significant work is a nobleman from an old aristocratic family and that the essay was written late in March or in April 1789; the author is an enlightened but pious person and the treatment of the clergy is rational and methodical; the divisions within the clergy are emphasized; criticism of the "despotism" of the bishops is

moderate yet incisive; great sympathy is displayed toward the curés and their plight is described in detail; author favors reforms such as the election of bishops by the curés of the diocese (as in early Christian times); the double rôle of the priest as citizen and cleric is developed; the writer finds the monastic state to be "hopeless and beyond reform," but advocates the preservation of their lands lest they fall into the hands of unscrupulous financiers after confiscation; he favors, however the diversion of monastic income to provide for the needy. After the abolition of the orders.
B.N. Lb39 1047 and B.S.P.-R. Rév. VI, 1

Tempus loquendi; une lettre de l'auteur [S.l.n.d. (1789). Pp. 37]. On page 37 is found the date: "11 mars 1789." A radical call for unity of curés against the higher clergy; almost certainly written by a curé soon after the elections to the States-General; anti-ultramontane; interesting passages on fear amongst higher clergy that curés will join with "our brothers" of the third estate to act against interests of prelates (implied is despoiling them of their wealth).
B.H.V.P. 967896

Thiébault, François-Martin. Discussion de cette proposition de M. de Custine: La Liberté de l'exercise public de toutes les religions doit être pronouncée dans l'Assemblée Nationale [Metz, Collignon, 1789. Pp. 51].
Tedious historical treatment to show dangers of Count de Custine's motion for freedom of religion; pamphlet appeared in October 1789 d'après Tribout de Morembert (see Biblio), p. 152, note 1.
B.N. Ld176 735; and Arch. Nat. Ad, XVIII, a 65, art. Thiébault.

Tous les cahiers de clergé de France réduits à un seul [S.l., 1789. Pp. 63].
Author is probably a curé; he argues in preface that curés should have a share of the biens ecclésiastiques; remainder of pamphlet is mere résumé of certain unspecified cahiers.
B.N. Lb39 1572

Traité du secours que le clergé doit au roi pour la défense et la conservation de l'état; signé L.M.A.A.L.G.C.P. (15 mars 1787) [Vatican, 1787. Pp. 18. Pièce].
Written before first Assembly of Notables by lay writer to show that historically the clergy had been subject to taxation, but that at present time by grace of the kings they were exempt; since they owe their immunity to the king and since they are the wealthiest order, they should be the most concerned with the conservation of the State and the support of the king; moreover, the clergy's

allegiance to the monarch can best be shown by financial aid to him (presumably by the voting of a larger don gratuit); further, that as "members" of the State, they owe this help to king.
B.N. Ld4 3043

Très-humbles et très-respecteuses représentations, que les dignitaires et chanoines de l'Eglise de Tulle supplient sa Majesté d'agréer [S.l., 24 avril 1789. Pp. 8].
Protest against the limited representation accorded the cathedral chapters by the Réglement du 24 janvier 1789.
B.S.P.-R. Rév. IV, 2

Très-humble requête au Roi, presentée par les curés & les prêtres chargés du ministère pastoral en France; où ils exposent combien il est à propos que leurs représentatans aux Etats-Généraux soient égaux en nombre à ceux du clergé supérieur et des bénéficiers ou autres ecclésiastiques, qui n'ont point charge de peuple [S.l., 1789. Pp. 16].
Written between January and March 1789.
Duke Library

Un mot à l'oreille du clergé [S.l.n.d. Pp. 8]. (Title page missing on copy at B.H.V.P.)
Written probably late in 1788 (definitely before 24 January 1789); anti-episcopal; argues that members of clergy have no right to sit in States-General because they hold no property in their own right (one of the principal criteria for election to States); author is pro-curé and assumes implicitly that curés are, like him, of the third estate.
B.H.V.P. 952708

Voeux de M. l'Abbé de Vanval, Doyen de Reges et Vicaire-Général de Châlons-sur-Marne, pour le bonheur et la régéneration de la France, addressés à MM. de l'Assemblée des Trois Ordres, convoquée à Paris le 24 avril 1789 [S.l.n.d. Pp. 32].
A vaguely-reformist statement that echoes most of the concessions stated by the clergy in its cahiers; this work, however, is notable for the obscurity of its phraseology when definite cases are concerned; the real wishes of the Abbé seem to please the curé element of his audience through the expression of approval for limited reforms in the Church.
B.N. Lb39 1508

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